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RUSSIAN COURT LIFE



Queen Catherine II

SCENES OF RUSSIAN COURT LIFE

*Being the Correspondence of Alexander I.
with his Sister Catherine*

TRANSLATED BY
HENRY HAVELOCK

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE
GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS

JARROLD'S PUBLISHERS (LONDON)
LIMITED



PREFACE.

THE Grand Duchess Catherine is known to have been the favourite sister of Alexander I. We know that he trusted her implicitly, had no secrets from her, and kept up a continual correspondence with her. All the witnesses agree in locating this correspondence among the archives of the Princes of Oldenburg in the Palace in the Champ de Mars, where, it was thought, it must have been destroyed during the fire in 1849.* But access to the Archives of the Foreign Office, known as the State Archives, having been graciously granted us, we have succeeded, after many years of fruitless searching, in finding a considerable portion of it, belonging to a most interesting period. These are not copies, but the actual originals, in their entirety, of 1807, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, and 1815, as also are fragments of what followed up to the sudden death of the Duchess late in December, 1818. There have likewise been preserved almost all the missives of Alexander, written, in many cases, in pencil, but all, unhappily, devoid of dates, which, unfortunately, there are no means of restoring otherwise than by conjecture based on the contents of the letters.

H.M. the Emperor's Private Library contains the letters and many pencilled notes from Alexander to his

* *Vide* "The Grand Duchess Catherine," a biographical sketch by J. Boyerianov, p. 62. Fire unhappily consumed, some years since, the Grand Duchess's correspondence with Rostopchin and Karamzin, and hence it is not easy to appraise her conduct in 1812.

sister between 1805 and 1812. There are several bundles which must have remained as they are without ever having been opened under Nicholas I., and which in the two following reigns were consulted by no historian, any more than were the files of the State Archives.*

There were also found in the State Archives, in several bundles bearing the Emperor Nicholas's seal, letters from the Grand Duchess to Alexander.

We are now authorised to make public these valuable documents, full of interest and information, which reveal more than one new feature of the Emperor's character. Often, in spite of their air of uncertainty and hesitation, these letters bear witness to clearness and firmness of view, to perfect confidence in taking a decision or determining it beforehand.

You see him, strong in his experience of life, now pursuing resolutely the execution of an accepted plan, now tracing for himself a line of conduct tardily determined on. All that was enigmatical to his contemporaries, all that men then held to be irresolution of character, vanishes in the new light of to-day. And in like manner his estimates, astonishing in their correctness, of different personages, native or foreign, stamp him as a keen gauger of men, an enlightened judge of the merits and shortcomings of individuals.

The remarkable letter which, in a state of visible agitation, he wrote to his sister on September 18th, 1812, the day after the battle of Borodino and the abandonment of Moscow, not only offers an admirable survey of Russia

* It is quite incomprehensible that the lamented Schilder, who had entry to the Archives of the Emperor's Private Library and went there almost every day, should not even have seen these letters of Alexander's. His "History" nowhere quotes them for reference. This eminent historian had a way of enriching the documents from which he worked with comments added on loose leaves. Now, the packets of Letters and Notes from Alexander to the Grand Duchess (Case II., No. 2, 21) show no trace of his characteristic handwriting.

at that particular moment, with a detailed account of the respective plights of the belligerents, but also shows a perfect knowledge of public opinion and the many rumours current. It contains portraits of Kutusov, Barclay de Tolly, Bagration, Bennigsen, Rostopchin, and the famous Count Sahlen, together with an estimate of their merits as soldiers. Everything is given in detail, quite clearly and without circumlocution, with a perfect knowledge of the subject. From one end of the long epistle to the other he betrays not a shadow of hesitation.* And later, when the matter shall be the following up without a check of the struggle with Napoleon, there is the same tone of blunt decision in the letters of 1813 and 1814. Even during the terrible days of Bautzen and Leipzig, notwithstanding physical fatigue, Alexander finds means to write to his sister, and to answer in detail all her appeals and questions, without neglecting the slightest point. And, to boot, he still has the strength to direct the complicated concerns of external policy, and withal watch over the concerted action of the allied forces.

The task was arduous, but he acquitted himself of it with success and rapidity. That was in sooth the apogee of the brilliant qualities of Alexander; he took in hand at the proper moment all the moving strings of the final struggle with the hated enemy, whose friendship has been irksome to him for five years past, a burden laid on him by Heaven. And, knowing that in this range of notions his views are shared by his sister,† he feels himself visibly drawn towards her. His letters breathe

* See also the curious pamphlet published at Paris, "Secret Correspondence between the Emperor Alexander and Bernadotte during the year 1812," by X., 1909. In it you realise all the clearness and definiteness of the Emperor's views.

† *Journal of the Russian Imperial Society of Military History*, 1910, part II., pp. 39-68—S. Gulevich. "The Part played by the Royal Family in the Moulding of the National Militia."

an unfaltering confidence, of a depth quite different from that which he showed his wife. For the Empress Elizabeth, despite her strong convictions, had not a character moulded to inspire enthusiasm, or the sacred fire which might gain a hold of such an impressionable nature. The two Princesses always remained strangers to one another ; on the death of Prince George of Oldenburg (December 14th, 1812), the Empress's cold disposition had shown but little interest in his widow, and now, in the light of their common enthusiasm for their country, the Emperor, more open to the influence of his sister, showed her an obvious preference. Let us note, for that matter, that nowhere here, either by the pen of Alexander or that of his sister, do we meet with the Empress's name ; while, though corresponding quite as regularly and affectionately with his wife, the Emperor did not, for all that, show the same trust in her. That is assuredly a feature of character.

Alexander's stay in London during the summer of 1814 gives us a good instance of the influence the Grand Duchess could exert over him. Of a glowing and impressionable turn of mind, she sometimes gave way to passing impulses which made her commit irreparable errors, and did her the greatest harm. Thus, in London, she began by falling out with the Regent, his Minister, and the Russian Ambassador, Count Lieven. Here her usual mettle flung her into the opposite extreme, and she cultivated the society of all those who were opposed to the Regent and the Conservative Minister. Her advances to the Regent's daughter, who was at differences with her father, as also to Lords Holland and Grey, the chiefs of the Liberal Opposition, rightly aroused the annoyance of the Government. Nor is this all. On reaching London, Alexander declined the palaces prepared for his reception, and preferred to go and stay

with his sister. The Regent was sorely vexed at this, and from the first it led to disputes of the unhappiest kind between the two Princes: nor to the last were they smoothed over, or even buried, to the utter despair of the Russian Ambassador.

From the political point of view the visit was a failure, and the outcome wholly negative, to the great delight of the many enemies of Russia, Prince Metternich, Lord Castlereagh, and many others. The fault lay entirely in the inconsiderate attitude of the Grand Duchess, and the influence she had managed to exert at a given moment over her Imperial brother.

Princess Lieven, born a Benckendorf, the well-known wife of the Ambassador, dwells on some episodes of this journey to London in a fragment of her "Memoirs," of which a copy is kept in the Emperor's Private Library. To make more intelligible the events of this period, we give in this volume some extracts from these memoirs not already quoted by Ernest Daudet.*

The astonishing thing is not so much the Grand Duchess's conduct, but that the Emperor could have committed such a breach of prudence. Was it not that he was beginning to be sated with glory and success after three years of the incessant moral and physical strain of his war against Napoleon? Such is, it would seem, the only possible explanation, for he was well aware of his sister's failings, and it would be difficult to believe that in these few months he should have come to lose sight for a time, not only of his own interests, but of those of his country. Be that as it may, the comments made with a certain irony by Princess Lieven are fully warranted. The consequences were not long in following, and they were lamentable. The

* Ernest Daudet, "The Life of an Ambassadors—Princess Lieven," 1904.

following year the Regent and Lord Castlereagh came to an understanding with Metternich and Talleyrand at the Congress of Vienna as to a Triple Alliance against Russia—England, Austria and France. And Alexander abode in the bosom of his continual triumphs and pomps at Vienna, not suspecting for an instant the possibility of a stroke as treacherous as this. Count Nesselrode, an empty courtier and a wretched diplomatist, let things go as they would, apparently oblivious of everything.

As an earnest student of the character and leanings of Alexander, let me point out contradictions as incomprehensible to us as they were to his contemporaries. Much as the struggle with Napoleon was pursued with fury and determination in Russia and abroad, to the obliteration not only of that potentate but of his whole system, to the greater glory of the Russian sovereign and arms, the part played by Alexander becomes thereafter not less dim and illogical. It might be said that his mind and will had been centred and exerted to one sole object, the overthrow of his rival. That aim once gained, the fire sank, the inspiration was quenched, and the soul of Alexander went in search of a new element calculated to satisfy it, while all the rest, including Russia's interests, was relegated to a kind of forgetfulness.

This new pursuit the Emperor soon found in the society and soulful converse of the Baroness Krüdener. An enthusiast, but with no clear aims, devoid of the slightest mother-wit, wholly superficial in her training, steeped in German and French philosophical studies, the Baroness had long been seeking to secure personal relations with the magical deliverer of Europe. After having long roved from place to place, and failed to find rest or satisfaction anywhere, she came to anchor, in 1811, in South Germany.

Switzerland did not suit her. Her religious propaganda caused her to be expelled from Würtemberg, and she then made her abode in the Grand Duchy of Baden. There in 1814, during the Empress Elizabeth's stay at Bruchsal Castle, she became friendly with Alexandrine Sturdza, her Lady of Honour (afterwards Countess Edling), and managed, through her, to get presented to her Majesty, who showed her some attention from the first, yet speaks of her with no great enthusiasm in her letters to her mother, the Margravine. None the less, it was a good opening, as a first attempt prior to an ultimate presentation to the Emperor. Mlle. Sturdza, to whom he had always been kindly disposed, managed for her part to interest him in her new friend, several times imparting to him clever letters written professedly for his behoof. At the time of the Congress of Vienna the two friends were in more sustained interchange than ever, and the maid of honour often had occasion, says Schilder, not only to mention the Baroness to the Emperor, but also to read to him letters of hers. "The first mystical impulses of Alexander go back to 1812," the historian here avers,* but it is hard to subscribe to this view, for the very simple reason that in 1812 he was wholly absorbed in his task as deliverer, and devoted himself totally to it to the end. If, as Schilder says, "he went to visit the Moravian Brothers in Silesia, had talks at Baden with Jung Stilling, and when in London showed every respect for the Quakers, and gave assurance of his interest to a deputation from the Bible Society," all that is much later than 1812, and we can only see in it doings in accordance with his character and sociable tastes.

But after his triumphant march through Europe, a noticeable change took place in him, and his letters to

* "The Emperor Alexander I.," vol. III., p. 322. *Ibid.*, p. 323.

his sister Catherine convince us of it. They escaped the researches of Schilder, which accounts for him, in his third volume, almost wholly ignoring the part the Grand Duchess played at the time, a part amply demonstrated, for that matter, by other documents found among her papers. Let us, for instance, quote, under the heading "Mystical Literature," notes on the works of Behmen the Theosophist, Swedenborg, Saint Martin, Stilling, and others. Let us also mark such notes from Alexander as this: "Here is something more. A sort of introduction to the famous minute on the Mystical Societies. Wholly yours, heart and soul, while I live, A." As such notes show, Alexander not only had intellectual interviews with his sister, but imparted to her various details. In a word, she was perfectly in the swim of his mystical ponderings, and inclined to approve of them.

In a letter of May 22nd (June 3rd), 1815, dated at Louisburg, he tells her at length of misunderstandings with a certain Virginia concerning conversations with his other sister Marie, and sends her a letter from that lady which has unfortunately not been found in the file, for it would have solved the riddle of Virginia's identity. Some passages give reason to suppose that it was none other than Baroness Krüdener; for instance, "What vexes me cruelly is that Virginia seems to reproach herself with having encouraged my attachment, whereas she more properly did her best to repulse me, or at least to make me believe it mattered nothing to her." And, further on: "Fall at Virginia's feet. Tell her that my affection for her is without end, that, despite all the ways she may be picked to pieces, she is so pure, such a tribute of admiration does my soul pay to hers, that it is impossible to mar her." The dates agree exactly. The Emperor's first interview with Mme. de Krüdener

took place at Heilbronn, on June 4th (16th), 1815, while the letters touching Virginia are from Louisburg on May 22nd (June 3rd), and Heidelberg, June 1st (13th). The Baroness had come and planted herself in the sovereign's way in the little village of Schluchtern (Hesse-Cassel), at the crossing of the main roads to Austria. Learning on June 3rd (16th) that he had just reached Heilbronn with his staff, she rushed thither without losing a minute, got down there in the middle of the night, and had herself forthwith announced, not quite readily, by Prince Volkonsky. She was received out of hand.

All this is set forth in a letter from the Emperor to Mlle. Sturdza, who was some stages further back with the Empress.* Although this letter has long been known, let me give some portions of it for greater clearness:—

“I breathed freely at last, and my first resource was to take a book I always carry with me, but my mind, overcast by dark clouds, did not readily imbibe the meaning of what I read. My ideas were confused and my heart oppressed. I let the book fall, thinking ‘What a consolation to me at such a moment the talk of a pious friend would have been.’ The thought made me remember you; I recalled also what you said to me about Mme. Krüdener, and my having expressed to you the desire to make her acquaintance. Where can she be now, and how can I ever meet her? Scarcely had I uttered this notion when I heard a knocking at my door. It was Prince Volkonsky, who, with an air of the greatest impatience, told me that he was disturbing me much against his will at that unearthly hour, but it was

* Joseph Turgnan, “Baroness Krüdener,” pp. 206-7; and Ch. Eynard, “Life of Mme. Krüdener,” 2. Schilder gives the translation *in extenso* in vol. III. of his “History.”

to appease a woman who was firmly bent on seeing me. At the same time he gave me Mme. Krüdener's name. You can imagine my surprise. I thought I was dreaming. 'Mme. Krüdener! Mme. Krüdener!' cried I. Such a prompt answer to my thought *could not be mere chance*. I saw her on the spot, and, as if she had read my soul, she plied me with some brave and consoling words which appeased the trouble I had been a victim to for so long."

Thus a quite accidental coincidence was not allowed by Alexander's imagination to be merely the outcome of chance. Put shortly, the explanation was far less complex. Mme. Krüdener had learned at Strasburg the landing from the Isle of Elba. She readily guessed that the Allied forces, including those of the Russians, would march afresh on France, and that Alexander would leave Vienna and proceed to Germany, where a portion of his army still lay. All that she had to do was to go and plant herself in the vicinity of headquarters, where he would assuredly go. Everything went right. The interview by night was a clever move, and we know how chance did the rest.

The interview having had no witnesses, we can only guess at its import, for the two actors were silent. It is a question still little known on the part of historians. We should like, on our side, to throw some light on this page in the Emperor's life.

The Baroness was a personage not easily appreciated. Thinking wholly of herself, she believed herself famous through her ill-fated romance, "Valérie," and aspired to vie alternately with Mme. de Staël and Mme. Récamier. The whole of her, for that matter, was seasoned with a strong dose of charlatanism which, far from making people take to her, only served to make her ridiculous. Ste. Beuve, better fitted to understand and judge of her

than any other, ends one of his "Mondays," which he devotes to her, as follows :—

"In her we must not forget that rare mixture of Livonian lightness and purity which accounts for everything." * A malicious comment, but well deserved.

As a specimen of the lady's prophetic inspiration, let me quote this passage from a letter sent from Strasburg to Mlle. Sturdza, then at Vienna with the Empress, on October 15th (27th), 1814: "The Angel who marked with saving blood the doorposts of the chosen, passes, and the world does not see him; he counts heads, judgment approaches, it is near at hand, and we are tottering over a volcano. *We are going to see guilty France, who according to the decrees of the Eternal was to be spared by the Cross that had subdued her, we are going to see her chastised.* Christians should not punish, and the man that the Eternal chose and blessed, the man we are privileged to love as our Sovereign, could not bring other than peace. *But the storm approaches; those lilies that the Eternal kept safe, that emblem of a pure and fragile flower which broke an iron sceptre because the Eternal would have it so, those lilies which should have called to purity, to love of God and to repentance, showed only to vanish again. The lesson has been given, and men, more hardened than ever, dream of nothing but uproar.*"

The moral of this harangue is that the Baroness was having a dull time at Strasburg instead of being at the Congress, to which she had not managed to secure the *entrée*. She had heard mention of the unpopularity of the Bourbons in France, and the increasing likelihood of Napoleon coming back, and she hurled the prophecy of it like a revelation from on high. In simple fashion the maid of honour made haste to impart the letter to

* Mme. de Krüdener, whose maiden name was Vietinghof, was a German from the Baltic Provinces.

the Empress, who had it read to her husband. The aim was attained, the Emperor was to forget nothing.

After the interview at Heilbronn the Baroness proceeded to Heidelberg, where she saw him almost every day; then, at his invitation, followed him to Paris. There she planted herself at the Hotel Montchesur, not far from the Elysée, where he had taken up his abode, and continued to see him every day. But for this second visit to Paris the Emperor was ill-disposed, apart even from his dealings with the importunate Baroness. The year before he had been the centre of everything, the saviour of Europe, and the object of general attention. Now they had done without the Russians, Blucher and Wellington had reaped all the laurels, and he was relegated to the background.

This explained the beginning of a letter from Brussels to his sister Catherine of 19th September (October 1st), 1815: "Here I am: clear of that cursed Paris!" Yet, a month before, on August 30th, he had held on his birthday the famous review of the Virtues in presence of thousands of onlookers, foremost among them the Emperor of Austria and King of Prussia, Count D'Artois (afterwards Charles X.), the Duke of Berry, Wellington, Napoleon's marshals, and many others! A sight unique in its kind. For that memorable day Baroness Krüdener had taken care to publish her pamphlet, "The Camp of Virtues," in honour of her hero and protector. Let us mark another touch of Ste. Beuve's: "In such guise did she appear on this plain at very dawn. Even so, standing at the moment of prayer, did she show like some Peter the Hermit before the meeting troops."

The review, the Baroness and her talks, Paris itself—the Emperor was apparently weary of them all. To this period belongs the birth of the Holy Alliance. Who

was the promoter of that great conception? The question has remained unsolved after having given rise to plenty of controversies among those of the day, and not less among later historians. It is more than probable that the prime mover was Alexander, and the Baroness's pen only did what more was needed, although Prince Metternich, in the face of all probability, ascribes to her, in his "Memoirs," the first conception. But he is the only one of that opinion. Without going thoroughly into the question, let me merely add that assuredly the Emperor and the Baroness cherished the same dream, and aimed at something rare, an inspiration from on high, though a chimera here below. Frederic Wilhelm of Prussia took a particular interest in the notion, as also Francis of Austria, and it was, by Metternich's prompting, the basis of a series of congresses—Aix-la-Chapelle, Laybach, and Verona—the profit of which was, however, none, or, more properly, negative as regarded the interests and greatness of Russia. Not long afterwards all Alexander's enthusiasm for the Livonian prophetess evaporated. She returned to her country without going as far as St. Petersburg. He, for his part, sedulously avoided any fresh interview with her, and she died a year before him, in the Crimea, on December 25th, 1824.

But, thus launched by her into the path of mysticism, Alexander did not pause in the pursuit of the hidden, and we see him so in his dealings with Prince Alexander Galitzin, the Archimandrite Photius and Countess Anne Orloff. No one knew exactly what to make of it; at times mysticism took the upper hand, at others mental divagations. He ended by showing himself heedless of everything, neglectful of affairs of state, and wholly disenchanted. We must not see in that the work of the prophetess or any other outward cause; the sum of his

whole youth, his bringing up under the guidance of La Harpe, the magic manner of his accession, his fruitless hankerings after Liberalism among young and untried advisers, and, lastly, the unhopèd-for success of the unequal contest with Napoleon, were the elements which moulded his nervous temperament and character on attaining manhood. He was prematurely aged, physically and morally, when he died in the full prime of life from a chance chill at forty-eight.

The present edition of his correspondence with his sister Catherine shows his complex nature at work. In this unfettered association with one so near to him he had no need to fear saying too much—he could lay aside the mask as he never did before any other person. The appended documents display to us the true Alexander, that puzzle to the crowd vanishes for a while, and it is this quality of naturalness which gives them all their value for us.

And what was his partner, this sister to whom he showed so much affection and esteem, and who so well understood him and agreed with him? She made but a brief stay here below, and died at thirty. This interesting personality has not yet found an adequate biographer. There is extant only a brief sketch of her, drawn up by Boyerianov for the century of her birth, and entitled, "The Grand Duchess Catherine, fourth daughter of the Emperor Paul I., Duchess of Oldenburg, and Queen of Würtemberg, 1788-1818," and no more.

As for her correspondence, the Russian Archives in 1870 gave her letters to General Derollant of the Engineers, her husband's, Prince George's, colleague at the Bridges and Roads.*

* "The complete life-story of this remarkable woman," wrote Bartenev as far back as 1870, "would afford, beyond doubt, a work full of stir and interest. She wrote much and often, but where are her letters, her papers?"

All the rest were burned with the muniments of the Oldenburg Palace; nor can we lament the fact too much, for there were among them items greatly interesting, as referring to the history of the day: amongst others, letters to Rostopchin and Karamzin. We may mention besides stray letters to various recipients, published at haphazard in the periodicals.

Catherine received, like her sisters, under her mother's supervision, a sound education, and one fairly complete for that day. While speaking and writing Russian well, no common acquirement in high society of the end of the eighteenth century, she also knew German and French very well, and even English. Despite the considerable weight and authority of her mother, she, more than any of her sisters, retained as a young girl a good sense of independence and all her individuality, which particularly found scope after her marriage. The woeful fate of her two elders, Alexandrina and Helen, who died successively in child-bed in the early days of their union, led the Empress-mother to postpone the wedding of the two others, and Catherine was not affianced till nearly twenty-one, in 1809, to Prince George of Holstein Oldenburg.

Other suitors had been brought to the fore; the union with Napoleon, of which there had been much question at the time of Tilsit and Erfurt, was rejected after some debate, not only by the mother but by the young Princess. Then Prince Alexander Kurakin, fully in the Empress's confidence, spent two years in fruitless proposals at the Courts of Europe. Several Austrian Archdukes were thought of in succession, nay, the Emperor Francis himself, who had lost his second wife, Prince Henry of Prussia, the Hereditary Prince of Bavaria, and lastly Leopold of Coburg, afterwards King of the Belgians. For one reason or another, none of

these aspirants proved suitable.* Not till 1808 did St. Petersburg receive the visit of that same Prince of Coburg and George of Oldenburg, the latter of whom the Grand Duchess preferred, though he was her cousin-german.

The marriage was celebrated on April 18th, 1809. Prince George was made Director-General of Bridges and Highroads, and Governor-General of Tver, Novgorod, and Yaroslavl, with a residence at the former, the so-called palace, a private house with a huge garden. The princely pair, however, did not enter into possession till the end of August, on coming back from a long trip on the Ladoga and Empress Maria Canals and Lake Matko. On August 18th, 1810, the Grand Duchess gave birth to a son, Frederic Paul Alexander, who died in 1829 at the early age of nineteen.

The life at Tver was very simple; they had plenty of visitors, not only people of rank, but anyone noted as a historian or writer; Count Rostopchin, Karamzin, Dmitriev, Prince Neledinsky Meletsky, and many others. In the course of lively conversations bearing on all material heads, the Grand Duchess showed particular interest in all that was Russian and all that touched on home politics.

Trusted without limit by her Imperial brother, she was in constant correspondence with him on all subjects that interested her, and we shall see him answering all questions as far as possible, fully satisfying her curiosity, and, in short, chatting with her without restraint and in all frankness. Unhappily, none of the letters have been kept that belong to the early part of the sojourn at Tver,

* Letters addressed to the Empress Marie by Prince Kurakin on the subject of his mission appeared in the Russian Archive for 1868, pp. 23 and 161, and 1869, p. 385. Letters from the Empress relative to various plans for the marriage of her daughters will be found in the appendix to the present volume, p. 247.

to wit 1809 to 1811, and those given below make us feel assured how interesting they must have been, the Grand Duchess writing more often than her brother, quite at her leisure, and loving to enter into details on matters of real life.

The Emperor kept nothing hidden from his sister—that there can no longer be the least doubt of; while she, on her part, exercised an undoubted ascendancy over him, as one can easily assure oneself in seeing how she wrote to him. Moreover, he was greatly touched by the consideration the Grand Duchess showed for his Maria Narishkin. The wily and astute Polish woman, on her part, highly valued it, and certainly did not fail to profit by it. She knew well how attached the Emperor was to his sister, and how highly he prized their relations, full of mutual confidence. How far the Grand Duchess was impartial and sincere in her kind dealings with her brother's well-beloved it is no doubt difficult to say, but if she wanted thereby to get the mastery of him it was an excellent plan. As a rule, be it said, the Emperor would not put up with a word on that score from anyone, nor even with the least allusion to it.

When he came to Tver in March, 1811, it was she who handed him Karamzin's famous little work "On Russia Ancient and Modern, from the Political and Social Point of View." It is further notorious that at the prompting of the same Karamzin and Count Rostopchin she had a great share in the fall of Speransky, and we can only regret that in the Emperor's whole correspondence not a word, even indirect, is to be found on that matter.

There is no great matter for astonishment that on delicate points he should prefer not to write, and confine himself to talking with no one at hand. It can at least be inferred from many letters in which he complains bitterly of his isolation, and of her not being with him, that he

needed greatly to see her "on questions which worry me." Now, he was at the same time extremely wary in his correspondence, especially such of it as passed through the post. Let us judge of this from a letter of December 18th, no doubt in 1810 or 1811, in which he advises his sister not to dwell too heavily on the Martinists. "For any's sake, let it never be by the post if there's anything that matters in your letters. Above all, not a word about the Martinists. On the other hand, by express speak to me always in full confidence. I shall follow the same rule myself." How well this limns a character! And how can we not be struck by these precautions with the Russian post, in which the Emperor plainly has not the slightest trust?

As for the part played by the Grand Duchess during the invasion of 1812, it is well known from other quarters, and lay above all in encouraging and backing the landed nobility in the work of levying militia. The way in which she performed that task is above all praise, and finds its full expression in her famous declaration, "The thing I most regret in life is not having been a man in 1812."

It was the three short years of her first marriage that were her heyday. Perfectly happy, and devoted to her husband, that worthy Prince George, so well fitted to console her impressionable nature and quiet her fits of bad humour in face of some annoyance, she lost all with him at a stroke. Carried off on December 14th, 1812, by a malignant fever caught during a visit to the military hospital at Yaroslavl, he, too, had conscientiously done his duty during the invasion.*

This unlooked-for mischance was pregnant with consequences to the young Princess. She grew more nervous than before, and began to give herself wholly to her grief;

* He had had on August 14th, 1812, a second son Peter, who, known later for his work in charity and education, died in 1881.

but events soon carried her to Germany, whither she followed her brother in 1813. She lived there almost constantly with her sister, and travelled with her. The next year she migrated to Holland, and then to England, where she made a great impression. We see her next figuring brilliantly in the rejoicings and grand doings of the Congress of Vienna, and in 1816 ending, not without great difficulty, in making the Empress-mother consent to her second marriage with another cousin-german, the Prince Royal of Würtemberg. The union was celebrated on January 12th (24th), 1816, at St. Petersburg.

Becoming Queen of Würtemberg some months later, she contrived to fall into her new part at once and win the hearts of her subjects. But this second marriage, by which she had two daughters,* was not to bring her any more lasting happiness than the first. An eruptive fever, complicated by chill, due to her own rashness, carried her off at the age of thirty, on December 28th, 1818.

In days when a personality somewhat gifted and rare had such little difficulty in coming to the fore, the Grand Duchess Catherine succeeded in making for herself, despite her youth, a leading and honoured place both in Russia and abroad. She is specially interesting to us by reason of her intimacy with the Emperor, her brother, and her great influence over him.

* Maria, born 1816, espoused Count Alfred Neipperg; and Sophie, born 1818, married the Prince Royal of Holland.

Scenes of Russian Court Life.

1805.

1.

BYREST,
September 15th.

DEAR BISIAM,

Your charming letter has given me the greatest pleasure. I cannot express how alive I am to all your friendship. I, too, love my dear Bisiam with my whole heart. Oh! that God wot, and all that comes to me from her touches me beyond all declaring. Farewell, my dear friend, I have only quite a brief moment. Think sometimes of your brother, who is greatly attached to you.

2.

PÛLAVY,
September 19th.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letters are one kinder than the other, and I cannot tell what pleasure they cause me. If you are a *mad thing* at least you are the most delicious one that ever existed. I vow to you in the first place that you have made quite a conquest of me and I am mad about you. Do you hear? Farewell, Bisiamovna. *I adore you!* *

* The words italicised are in Russian in the original.

3.

PÛLAVY,
September 20th.

ABSURD LITTLE MAD THING,

Get out of your head that to answer you is a trouble to me. As soon as I have a moment it is a real pleasure, for I love few things in the world like my Bisiam.

* * * * *

The news you gave me of Aunt* was a real pleasure to me, if she is kind enough to think of me. I assure you no day goes by without my thinking of her. Tell her so, I beg of you, from me. Farewell, light of my eyes, adored of my heart, polestar of the age, wonder of Nature, or, better than all these, Bisiam Bisiamovna with the snub nose.

There is a lot left of the white grease which they put on the wheels. I should like to send you some to keep up that kind of softness in the muscles of the nose on which I press the tenderest of kisses. All yours, heart and soul.

4.

PÛLAVY,
September 22nd.

What a lucky day ! Maria† has given birth to a lusty boy,‡ and I have had a letter from my Aunt.

Hence I cannot tell you all the pleasure that this

* Henrietta of Nassau-Weilburg, wife of Duke Ludwig of Würtemberg, brother of the Empress Maria.

† The Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna.

‡ Prince Charles Alexander of Weimar, born September 13th (25th), 1805.

has given me. The post will have already brought you the good news about Maria, so I speak to you of it as a thing that you know quite apart from me.

A thousand thanks, my kind friend, for your two letters, which are as sweet as yourself, and for the "Ladies' pens," with which I pen these lines to you. They're a marvellous contrivance, especially for travellers, and all my pens are going to undergo a total reform. Dear friend, send your love in the enclosed to my Aunt the first time you write to her, as also the other to my Uncle. I cannot tell you what pleasure my Aunt's letter gives me. Say a thousand things, in addition, to her from me. Farewell, dear Biskis, I love you with my whole soul.

5.

PÛLAVY,
September 24th.

Greeting from the affable Monarch to Biskis Bisiamovna! You are an honest being, my kind friend, and often enough the teasing charm of your missives has dispelled the dark melancholy of my stomachic vapours. It's quite I that am mad to-day, and the memory of Mme. Litta's* attractive adiposity has excited my imagination. When you see her, pray tell her I kiss her hand. As for her little minion, Princess Bagration,† she may gallop wherever she likes with her vinegar and all the rest of her drug chest. It is not I that will stop her on the way. As for the Sprengportens, I am very glad that the sight of the lady's birth makes up for the horrible effect

* Countess Catherine Litta, born Engelhardt, Countess Skavronsky by her first marriage.

† Princess Catherine Bagration, born Countess Skavronsky, daughter of the above.

produced by her Lord's. The upshot is that you are very pretty and very kind, and that I am much your *servant* and with all my *heart*. That's a rhyme and I feel I am growing a poet. Farewell, my madcap sister.

6.

PÛLAVY,
September 27th.

If my letters give you pleasure, my dear friend, I assure you yours afford me a very real one. But you are quite absurd in asking me as a favour not to write to you. And I, look you, am eager to honour you with my handwriting. If it bores you, so much the worse; if the reverse, my object is achieved. But rest assured that directly I have a moment it is a pleasure to me to write to you. Farewell, dear friend, all yours for ever.

7.

PÛLAVY,
September 29th.

A thousand thanks, my dear friend, for your letter. You see, dear Bisiam of my heart, that I carry out your orders exactly, and, the days I am too busy, abstain from writing you. The discovery you have made as to the haycarts does credit to your perspicacity. I must say a word to you about your portrait. It produces a great effect wherever I show it, and they declare

that Miss Catherine has a pretty enough phiz. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for ever.

Remember me to the Countess* and a word, too, to *Mistress Anne Pavlovna*.†

8.

PÛLAVY,
October 2nd.

BISKIS BISIAMOVNA,

A thousand thanks for your two kind letters, of which I got one this morning and the other after dinner. The second messenger is a man indeed! This is the second time he has caught up the one sent twenty-four hours before him. How fares that dear nose I take such pleasure in flattening and kissing? I much fear it may grow hard during the eternity we are apart! Oh, how I feel tempted to come in place of an express, and give you a kiss, and then get back to my post. Farewell, my darling. These two days we have had frightful weather, but that does not hinder me from thinking constantly of you, dear Bisiam, whom I love with my whole heart.

1807.

I.

What have you done, dear Alexander? How is it possible you should have such an idea? I am as grateful as can be, but at the same time sorely hurt. A pin

* Countess S. H. Charlotte Lieven, afterwards governess to Alexander's sisters.

† The Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna.

from you, dear friend, makes me as happy as a child, but so costly a present can only distress me. When I looked at the samples with you yesterday at my rooms, I never thought such an idea could come to you. What distresses me is that they might think I had begged it. In heaven's name, dear Alexander, promise me it shall be the first and last costly present you make me. I am as alive as can be to your attention but I own to you that such an outlay on my account distresses me.

P.S.—BY EMPRESS MARIE.

DEAR A——

It is true that Catiche burst into tears when I came in, so much so that she frightened me. She feels deeply your kindnesses, your friendship, but I declare to you her delicacy endears her to me even more. She is a kind and charming little creature: I told her, however, not to rob you of the pleasure it was your intention to do her.

9.

April 14th, 1807.

I really must say to you "*Khristos voskres*" (Christ is risen), dear friend, as I cannot write it on your sweet cheeks, which I should have kissed in this case several times more than usual. I assure you that, when they struck up the chant, I indeed thought of you and the merry night we generally spend after that day. Farewell, wholly yours, heart and soul.

II.

April 26th.

Mamma being good enough to treat me, I venture to say, as a friend, and to confer on me a thousand kindnesses, she spoke to me yesterday of the Empress of Austria's death, and how it might mean a settlement for me. I own to you I see nothing against it, no valid reason to put forward or plead. As far as my poor lights go, the Emperor has made two women of quite different character happy, and from that point is most respectable. I know none of my aspirants personally. This one has a record as a good husband, and that is much. After the conversation of yesterday she was good enough to read me the letter she wrote you on the subject. That is a new proof of her goodness to me, and I beg you, dear, to give a moment's heed to the future of a sister who loves you so much. Knowing what interest you have always shown in me, I reckon that you will think for a moment about my *high destinies*. Why can I not speak to you, dear A——, for writing is not my forte? I may well say with the song, "*Three husbands for one.*" What are you doing now, dear friend? Here it's the same thing one day as another. Forgive me, Sire, for having detained you so long to-day. I pride myself so on your *kindness* that I hope you will not bear a grudge against your tiresome but faithful sister and friend, Catherine.

III.

April 28th, 1807.

DEAR ALEXANDER,

As I took up my pen to write to you I felt a little like a pupil appearing before his pedagogue. He

scratches his ear, not knowing what temper his master is in, but, after all, I said to myself, "If he likes it, well and good; if not, he will tell us his reasons, and we shall see." In any case, I say to you, "Let us be friends, Linna. 'Tis I beseech you to! I wash my hands of it. *What will come, will come.*"

Do not cease always to wish me well, my kind friend. I venture to say I deserve it by the sincere devotion I bear you. Farewell, dear! Wholly yours.

10.

BARKENSTEIN,

May 5th.

DEAR AND KIND FRIEND,

Lack of time kept me from writing to you by the last post to thank you for your nice letters and all the confidence you show me. I have written to Mother at length on the *most exalted* match offered you, but no one on earth will make me regard it as possible that it could bring you happiness. I should like you to be forced to remain, just once, twenty-four hours alone with the person, and if the taste for marrying him does not leave you by next day, my name shall not be what it is. You know I don't love hugging illusions, and cling to facts, and I hold it my duty, my devotion to you and my honour, to speak frankly and without mincing on a subject I have so dearly at heart. I think your happiness comes first. At least that's my way of judging. After that, Mother will always have full power to decide such things. Farewell, dear friend, &c.

IV.

May 6th, 1807.

My good friend Tischbein having made a pastel picture of me, which is very like, Kurakin asked to have a copy and I promised it him. As it turns out, it goes very opportunely to Vienna. It is an inspiration of Heaven, surely. In promising it to him I did not think it would help to decide my fate. Forgive me, friend, I talk to you always of the same thing, but I am so used to count on your friendship and ease in listening that I cannot be silent. Love your friends with their faults.

V.

May 11th.

I begin, my friend, with a great sigh of relief that you and the Army are in good health, for the delay in news had made me uneasy, and I go on to thank you for having made me spend an hour yesterday in mad laughter. Mother was good enough to show me your letter in answer to that on the match with Emperor Francis. Among the reasons you might urge against it, *virtue* certainly never occurred to me. I am delighted you had such a lack of real reasons that you went and unearthed *that*: I laugh as I think of it. I admire your going and fishing up a peccadillo of fifteen years back, and another of perhaps twenty. He is old, dirty, ugly: old, so you say! Ugly! I can boldly give the lie to anyone who says a man's handsome face ever impressed me. If dirty, I should wash him. Look you, Alexander, I die as I write to you. You found him dull, lifeless,

dead. That may well be, the reasons we will pass over in silence and with good reason. The only valid one you advance is that maybe the Emperor is not for marrying again, which we must see. Much obliged, my lord, at the queer sort of *party* you gave me for my birthday. It was as good as a play and the funniest of them. Nothing new here, and the weather bad.

II.

TILSIT,

May 13th.

I do not want to let the post go, my friend, without adding some words to my letter, and thanking you for yours. Do you know, I am inclined to think you a bit mad. Why do you make so many excuses? But what is more laughable still, you tell me not to be cross with you. Why should I, and what harm have you done me? No, my dear friend, it would be madness in me to be angry with you on such a score. As for the matter itself, I must have told the truth as it appears to me, and that because I love you from the bottom of my heart, and it would be frightful to me to see you unhappy for life. However, God forbid that I should seem to hinder the thing if you are bent on it yourself. At least I shall not feel to blame, and it will be a case of "*Georges Daudin, tu l'as bien voulu!*" But this letter is long enough, and I am dying of sleep. Farewell, my king, true friend! No one is more devoted heart and soul to you than I.

VI.

May 13th.

A thousand, thousand thanks, my kind friend, for your letter of the 5th. It gave me more pleasure than I can tell. May Heaven pay it back to you, dear A——! The least of your friendly expressions is infinitely precious to me. I deal first with the postscript of yours. Call me mad, crazy, foolish, or what you will, but I must confess to you what will show, I hope, whether I love and have confidence in you. On the 10th, when your letter to Mother on the match with the Emperor came, with almost its whole contents bearing on me, though no word was addressed to me, nor even a poor little compliment (the silence has been the same during several posts), I put a good face on it while I was not alone, but when I was I own my childishness; I wept hot tears, sooth, like a calf. It was wrong, I admit, but blame yourself for having accustomed me to tokens of your friendship. I am not exacting, God wot, but, as it was, this sort of neglect seemed to me so strange that it distressed me keenly. Your P.S. set all that right and made me forget it. Now let us get on to the main subject. The personage has always been reputed an upright and good man. What more could I desire? For it seems the whole breed of princes is of two kinds: worthy people with scanty brains, and clever ones, but of hateful character. Of the two, the former is beyond dispute the better. I know well that I should find neither an Adonis nor a Phoenix, but a worthy, good man. So much for domestic happiness. As for brilliancy there can be no two ways of looking at this match. Of all the family there is not one that the public voice denies a good heart. Assuredly their capacities differ much, but, nothing being perfect, and

many advantages combining in this match, I own it tempted me. I am not infatuated, I want the thing because I believe my happiness lies in it. If it breaks down do not think I shall be heartbroken. I shall regret it certainly, but shall manage to console myself. Forgive this long discussion, my friend. As I had once mooted the subject I wanted to probe it to the bottom, so as not to trouble you for a long while. You are so good to me and show you think so much of my happiness that I hope you will forgive me. I am very grateful for the frankness and the trust with which you speak to me. My heart is quite touched by it and I even see, in your scanty liking for the matter, proof of your interest in me. I own to you that it all alarms me, and I would it were settled.

VII.

May 19th.

You will have seen by the preceding what I think, and why I want the thing with which I will not weary you further. By chance I learned that at Vienna as here there is a notion that I wish it.

I will undertake the *Georges Daudin*, provided that the gentleman does not turn crusty.

12.

TILSIT,

May 19th.

I am delighted, my dear, to have afforded you amusement by my letter to Mother, but own frankly that that was not my object. I hope you may be as much

inclined to laugh after being some years married to the Emperor. At least I have done my duty and told the truth. If you and Mother find my portrait of the Emperor attractive, 'tis a matter of taste, and I will interfere no more. But what I on my part found very diverting is that you both talk as if I cherished a sort of envy and wished to thwart your plans. Yet it seems to me that even if you do not marry the Emperor, the reversion of that honour will not fall to me. If you fancy I have a personal grudge against him, there too you are wrong, and I appeal to all who know him whether one *can* have one.

As to Virtue, at least of that kind, I have never been the champion of it, and only spoke of it in answer to a long discourse contained in Mother's letter on the Emperor's morals. No, my dear, it was by no means in a jocular strain that I spoke of it, but with a kind of sorrow. It pains me to think that such an angel as you should fall to the share of a being like him. I only wish your welfare, and that you should be as happy as you deserve. It is the last time I shall speak of it, for as the matter is all but decided it does not become me to speak ill of one who is to be your husband. I devoutly pray that after two years of marriage you may be able to tell me, "I am happy as I wish to be." Then I shall be satisfied: till then, I cannot repress anxiety as to your future. Farewell, dear, all yours, heart and soul.

VIII.

May 23rd.

He is forty, this fogey, you say. That is no great harm! If Mother allows the match, it must

certainly not be against your religion. That the campaigns of '99 and '05 have put us in bad odour with the Austrians is so, and I agree that they are not wrong; but I can tell you that those here, and, to judge by plain advices from Vienna, the public yonder, both thought of the thing and wanted it. Ours (since there is such) did the same. We shall see if the gentleman wants it. You say he is a poor mate for me. Granted; but as the whole breed of princes seems of three kinds, fools but good, wits but wicked, and lacklands, it is between the three the choice lies. I am lively, true, and fond of amusement, but the life I have led since October seems to show I can do without pleasures. How can you think that titles tempt me? No, friend, I know that they do not. You talk of the dependent state of Austria: but mention a single country which is not so. That poor tiny Weimar which seemed so peaceable, is it not in a turmoil? Did we not see in November and December Russia herself grow alarmed and uneasy as to her fate? Your own experience you cannot apply: things are different with a man and a woman. Besides if his she-devil of a spouse has been able to make him do what she wanted, and every folly that she sought, why should not I hope to make him do something reasonable? They say he has not always lived like a hermit. As for busybodies, they are, I think, to be dreaded and shunned everywhere. If a woman at twenty cannot tell good from evil she never will. He is upright and kind, and that is two good points settled. It all depends on him. I want it; I have told my reasons, which seem good to me. For the rest, all is in the hands of Providence. Live and you will see. *What is to happen will happen!*

IX.

May 26th.

I have your letter of the 19th, dear and kind friend, touching me greatly by the friendship you show me in it. It is cruel to me to be at variance in opinion with you whom I value beyond all expression, but what is to be done? It is just my way of seeing things, and I cannot in conscience change it, for I should be at strife with myself. All my care and desire is always to be at one with you, but in this case that is impossible. Far from regarding the matter as almost settled, I think it still very uncertain, thanks to the opposition that many folks at Vienna will make to it. I know well that I should have awful, cruel times at first in leaving you whom I love so here, and then being yonder in a world that is quite unknown to me, without any support or advice save my own. But whatever state I chose, the objections will be the same and the advantages quite different. You have made me laugh by thinking that I supposed you to be jealous. To sum up, friend, I own that I am anxious and should like to know the decision at the earliest. I am very grateful for all the friendship you show me. You are always the same, and what I rejoice in most is that you are not angry with your Biskis.

X.

June 25th.

A thousand thousand thanks, dear A——, for your letter. I am much touched at being remembered, for you know my fondness for you. Since you give me leave to speak thus, to speak to you of what is happening, by so doing yourself, I will tell you I shall not resign

myself to this peace unless the rumours of the town are realised—to wit, if we make great and handsome gains, the Vistula for frontier towards Prussia, and the Danube towards Turkey, for apart from that we shall only reap the shame of siding with a man against whom we have cried out with justice while Russia gains not the least real benefit or honour. We shall have made huge sacrifices, and for what? Doing precisely what we have found fault with in those more feeble than we. I want Russia to be inviolable, unassailable, inaccessible. I wish to see her respected, not in word but in reality, seeing that she certainly has the means and the right to be so. While I live I shall not get used to the idea of knowing that you pass your days with Bonaparte. It seems merely a bad joke when people say it, and impossible. All the coaxing he has tried on the nation is only so much trickery, for the man is a blend of cunning, personal ambition and falseness. As for his blandishments to you, I find them perfectly natural, and by no means astonishing. He does himself honour in being with you, and, great as he is, nothing can happen to him more fortunately than to be able to call himself your friend, for by that all his enemies become friends and he more powerful and sure of his power than ever. You will curse me, you will curse yourself for having let me speak, but what I say is only what I feel and my heart-felt conviction. Grow angry or not, that is for you to decide. Forgive my prolixity, my friend, but it is out of the fulness of the heart that the mouth speaks. Farewell, Alexander! My sincere fondness will end only with my life.

Is it true, dear friend, that Bonaparte speaks Russian? They make out he was heard to say, because you came to meet him, "*Like your Majesty, you see!*" That is all that is needed to fascinate our people.

1808.

13.

WEIMAR,
the 26th.

DEAR BISKIS,

Can you fancy my good fortune ? I am with Maria, Madame Cleophas ! * She is as well as may be. How glad we were to meet again, you cannot conceive. Her child is delightful, and does not smell at all. But what is truly delicious is the site where Madame Cleophas lives and the charming spot she dwells on. How many times already we have spoken of you ! The picture you gave me is on the table, till I leave, of course. In a word, they are true days of enjoyment for me. There is only Aunt, who departed for Weilburg before they knew I was coming, that I greatly regret. Bonaparte makes out that I am nothing but a fool. "They laugh longest who laugh last !" And I put all my trust in God.

14.

WEIMAR,
Sept. 27th, 1808.

DEAR COUNTENANCE OF MY SOUL,

I always grow angry when foolishly you tell me that I don't read your letters. It is as if you did not know the pleasure that they give me every time. What I always regret is being kept by lack of time from answering you, but you are too good to be

* Mary, wife of Cleophas (St. John xix. v. 25). The person referred to is the Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna.

angry with me for that. Madame Cleophas can testify to you how lax I am, and she is quite astonished. I am also well pleased when *after parade* I find myself facing your dogs and *Mistress Anna Pavlovna*, to whom I present my *bediance*. In passing, I am afraid I forgot to thank the Countess* for her kindness in collaborating on the famous bedgown, or, rather, Aunt's gown. If my neglect extended to you I grovel in the dust produced by your train when you walk the corridors, and crave your pardon. Farewell, dear Biskis. Don't forget a brother who loves you with all his heart.

15.

ERFURT,

September 29th.

Thank you, dear friend, for your kind letters. You know what pleasure they always give me. But what has given me what is hard for me to express is having again seen my Aunt†—I need not say which of them. She is exactly as you saw her, and it was a real delight to me. She reached Weimar just as I was starting hither, so I could not see her then. That was some days since, when we had been shooting near Weimar. We only arrived for dinner. As she did not know Napoleon she did not come thither, and the rest of the day was spent at the theatre or a ball. Next day we left Weimar so early in the morning that again I had to give up going to see her. At length—the day before yesterday—she reached here, and stayed till yesterday evening.

* Countess, afterwards H.S.H., Charlotte Lieven.

† Henrietta of Nassau-Weilburg, wife of Duke Louis of Würtemberg, brother of the Empress Marie.

I went twice to her, and that reminded me of you and days gone by. You will understand that we talked much of you, and she questioned me constantly. It is certain she is the best creature on earth. She gave me this little ring for you, which I hasten to send you at once. Farewell, dear! In a fortnight, maybe, I shall be so happy as to embrace you. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

1809.

16.

BORGA,
March 17th.

The Princess is still as charming and pleasing as usual, so kiss her feet for her nice letter. I inform her very humbly that, thanks to the good offices of the Roving Bishop, I hope to be able to get back to Petersburg and regale you with a Finnish "swagger," or at least a "litany."

My part at the Diet was, I assure you, very dignified and masterful, and I even read a speech *in a loud and audible voice*.

Another to-day at the Cathedral, and the third I keep for you, fair and peerless Princess, which shall vaunt your charms, your virtues, your graces, your affability, *your munificence*, and, above all, the sincere and unalterable love I bear you for life.

I kiss the white hands of *Machinka* and ask the blessing of the son of Piotr, *her betrothed*, the Most Serene Prince George of Holstein-Oldenburg. With which I am off to Svenborg.

17.

August 24th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Why can I not share the lot of these lines ? I have just received the news that Mother is off to see you. This is the time to say : " Attain Heaven. Do not merely aim at it."

I cannot say how much I miss you, nor the need I feel of seeing you and holding you in my arms. Ah, dear, patience awhile, and my hour for requital will come and repay the restraints I have inflicted on myself. Your last, by Constantine, gave me inexpressible pleasure. I pitied you with all my heart for the weariness you endured at Tikhvin. But you have not managed to repay yourself. If you had profited by my lessons in church singing you would have found the visit a very pleasant one.

Say a thousand things from me to George. At Novgorod he will receive a letter from me. Be always as happy as I wish you to be, and as you both deserve. Do not forget a brother who is devoted to you heart and soul for life.

18.*September 6th.*

DEAR, DEAR FRIEND, MY KIND TRUE FRIEND,

I announce to you peace with Sweden, such as I desired. But I leap from this delightful subject to speak of another which I have at heart even more urgently : that is to tell you that you are a real angel, that I am touched beyond words, and that during these last few days I have suffered from wanting to write to you

and being unable to do so for stress of work and the constant expresses that came to me from Friedrichshamm. Here all is finished at last, thank God.

You cannot think how glad I am to know that you are satisfied with your abode. It seems to me that it cannot be worthy of you, and I am furious with the accursed gardener who, against my express orders, has disturbed the *regularity* of the old garden. However, I think only of the moment when I can come to you and clasp you to my heart in the old fashion. I have a craving for you, yet you urge me not to forget you! Is it possible? I was very uneasy for a moment over your horrible dysentery, and my head, always ready to see the gloomy side of things, gave me a thousand alarms. Gûriev relieved me somewhat by assuring me he had seen you quite well on September 1st, and I like to think that you have since got better and better. Now, after finishing our private affairs, let us get back to public. This place is simply perfect, and just what I should have wished. I cannot sufficiently thank the Supreme Being. Entire cession of Finland as far as Tornea and the Aland Islands, adhesion to the Continental System, closing of our ports to England, lastly, peace with our allies, the whole arranged without intermediaries—*there* is occasion for a fine *Te Deum*! Ours to-morrow at St. Isaac's, with full military state, will be no mean one.

Herewith all good luck to you. I am dying for some sleep after the most *wearying* of days. Why can I not embrace you as I should wish? Yours, heart and soul, for life.

19.

December 23rd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I am waiting to answer your letter by Brimmer when I send him back to you in a few days. Meanwhile I send this off to you to tell you of one of the most grievous plights in which *I ever found myself*. Napoleon is obtaining a divorce, and casting an eye upon Anne. This time it is permanent, and I can refer you to the details Mother gives you. The right course is hard to choose. My view is that in view of all the trouble, annoyance, ill-will and hatred that is borne towards the individual, it is easier to decline than to accept with a bad grace.

I must, however, do Mother the justice that she showed much more calm over it than I should have believed. Anyhow she wishes to consult you, and I find she is perfectly right. I too ask your advice with that confidence I place in your reason and heart. Wholly yours for life. Send back the bearer as quickly as you can. My remembrances to George.

1810.

20.

PETERSBURG,

February 22nd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Gagarin leaves to-day, but instead of announcing my certain coming on March 15th to Tver, for which I had made all preparations, he will announce to you someone else's coming. It is two days that



Princess Lieven



*They** imparted this fine plan to me. Of course I could make no objections, and I carefully concealed the fact that I myself meant to make the journey at the same time, because they would have urged me to go with them, and it would be a torture to me to be in your house otherwise than for the first time. Anyhow I must give it up for the present, and that grieves me more than I can express. *They* cannot be back till March 29th, so I shall miss the benefit of sledging in April, and have to wait till wheels are available. All this puts me in a mood that is not rose-coloured, not to speak of a thousand mischances which I foresee for you, and which grieve me vastly. *They* have bidden Gagarin break this pleasant news to you that the delight of it may not be too much for you. I keenly desire that the pleasure you will experience therefrom may repay you for the troubles you will have to pass through. Heart and soul yours only for life. Best wishes to George.

21.

PETERSBURG,
March 11th.

By the letter Constantine brought yesterday to Mother I saw that you are getting impatient, dear, for the return of your post. My intention was to send him back to George with the lists of his officers, which will be ready on Sunday; but since you are waiting for him I will send him this evening, and then again.

* "They" is the Empress Marie. The Emperor had really to put off his journey and only reached Tver at the end of May.

Do not be angry with me if I have not written to you all this time. I am not in a good humour, and can give you my word that the need for giving up coming to see you has much to do with it. I greatly want to relieve my mind of all that has had time to gather in the three months since we met: hence I wait for the moment which shall bring us together again as for the Messiah. I always loved you dearly, and since we have been apart I feel the whole worth of it. Placed as I have been meanwhile, I am sure my letters are worth nothing, and that is why I do not importune you with them. George asked me how far he should go to meet Mother.* I think it should be to Torjok, which is the end of the world. Still there is extant an ordinance of the late Emperor's forbidding the Governor to go and meet anybody, even the Sovereign.

Say much from me to your friend, and that he shall have all his officers. I hope in general that the machine will work easily. Sabir† is here and we shall gradually remove all the difficulties. Mother has been here since February 18th, and deprives me of at least a good hour's work a day. All means of keeping her from the journey have proved fruitless. She cherishes a very lively idea of your enthusiasm for having her with you. She makes out she is affected to tears by it. Farewell, dear, sweet friend. I only speak to you of what I feel for you. You know the rest. My small family is at your feet.

* The Empress from 16th to 24th March.

† Joseph Sabir (1777-1864), Engineer of Roads and Bridges and Major-General, Prince George of Oldenburg's colleague.

22.

March 23rd.

DEAR KIND FRIEND,

My cousin* is off to till his fields at Moscow. He thinks the snow will act as dressing. He asks me for a letter of introduction to you, which is why I weary you with these lines. When you have nothing better to do let me have some details of *the famous visit* that "They" paid to you. I don't think those we have here are over reliable. Amongst other things we were told you fainted on catching sight of the Very Dear Visitor. I let them talk, and recalled your letter in answer to that which Gagarin brought you. Aline, Queen of Golconda,† has arrived. She had written me a very pathetic letter, making due amends for her sins, and declaring a very keen repentance.

Farewell, dear! Think sometimes of a brother who loves you with all the faculties of his being, and is yours heart and soul for life.

23.

GRUSINO,
June 7th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Having a moment to myself, I cannot resist the desire I have to tell you how alive I am to all the affection you showed me at Tver. It was a delicious time you caused me to spend.

I reached here just thirty-six hours after leaving you. It is a truly charming place. But the order which reigns here is unique. I particularly admire the arrangement of the villages. I am sure there is nothing like it in

* No doubt Duke Eugene of Würtemberg.

† Countess Anne Protassov, honorary Maid of Honour.

the Empire. When I write to you it is the same as writing to George; so show him these lines. I beg him urgently to get General Atakcheef, when he comes this way in a "droshka," to drive him round all the villages where he took me and to notice (1) the order which reigns everywhere, (2) the cleanliness, (3) the laying out of the roads and plantations, (4) the sort of symmetry and elegance displayed throughout. The village streets hereabout have *just that sort of tidiness* which pleases me so much in towns. How badly the streets of Novgorod, Valdai, Wikkny Volochok, and others need looking after, and what a striking difference! Tell George to give the order by express to repair a damaged gate on the Ladoga Canal, which, as I have just been told by bearded elders, has detained a number of barges. By sending to the spot we shall know how things stand. Farewell, my dear. You know how I love you heart and soul for life.

P.S.—All kind messages to your ladies, and especially to the divine Mme. Muraviev.*

24.

TSARSKOE SELO,
June 27th.

I have received, dear friend, the letter you wrote me on the 22nd. I cannot tell you how touched I am by the interest you take in my sorrow.† There is no help for it. I have lost my child, and with her part

* Catherine Muraviev-Apostol, sister of the Decembrist, Maid of Honour to the Grand Duchess, and afterwards Mme. Bibikov.

† Mme. Marie Narishkin had just lost a child, Zyong Zenaida.

of the happiness that was mine in this world. I know your tenderness for me, and how you sympathise with all that concerns me. I therefore prefer not to speak to you of what my soul feels. Your presence will be a real happiness and a balm to it (viz., to my soul).

P.S.—I send you two books by Lopukhin.* I don't know if they are those you asked me for, as I was awkward enough to lose your note on the way. I also send the French translation by Pleshchiev.

25.

October 8th.

I cannot tell you, dear friend, what pleasure was given me by the news Wisare brought me of you, for what my brother had told me had distressed me greatly. That spitting of blood is more than alarming, and I adjure you in the name of the tenderest affection to take more care of yourself, for I know that you commit unpardonable imprudences. This time it has passed over, thank God, without other consequences, but another time it might be more serious. Then judge of the anguish you throw us into, and all that for a hood the less worn when walking! You see, dear, I am severe, but admit that you deserved it. Moreover, why do you not tell me at length in your letters about your health? What subject can interest me more? I venture to require it of your fondness. This letter will be handed you by a Deacon and Chorister from Court, whom I send you *for the good of the Service*, like the detachments General Kleinmichel commands. When they have taught your

* Senator Ivan Lopukhin, a Freemason.

Levity their lesson, be good enough to send them back to their homes. In a little while a Deacon fully fledged for your Church will reach you. Farewell, dear, think of a brother who loves you with all his heart. Many remembrances to George. Sabir will be back in a few days. I am waiting for an account of his stewardship.

26.

December 26th.

MY DEAR,

I indite these lines to you with an aching heart, and am deeply conscious what you will feel. Everything is assuming a dark hue. George will show you my letter. It seems blood will still flow, but at least I have done all that was humanly possible to avert it. That is the real reason why I have written to you so little, but if I am not happy I am not crushed, and submit myself to God's will with confidence in Him. I wait with impatience to be able to tell you when I shall be with you. There are so many things I would fain discuss with you, but can do so only by word of mouth. Well, the end of February or after March 11th I shall come and see you.* Farewell, my kind, excellent friend. Tell yourself that to love you more than I do is impossible. Try to be reasonable and show you have resolution. Heart and soul are yours for life.

To make it more methodical, and to give time to look into all matters, I intend to divide our conversations in the following way:—

1. On politics.
2. On military dispositions.
3. On internal economy.

* He did in fact go to Tver and stay with his sister from March 14th to 26th, 1811.

The first will include—

1. All that has happened since last summer.
2. Our various measures with the Cabinets.
3. The present state of things.

The second will comprise—

1. The state and distribution of our forces during the past summer.
2. How far they have been augmented.
3. Their actual distribution.
4. State of the Reserves, and their quartering.
5. The location of Recruit Depots.
6. The creation of second and third line Depots.
7. Our defensive position.

The third will cover—

1. The Report of the Secretary of State.
2. His private Report.
3. Different ideas on institutions to be called into being.
4. The organisation of a Home Armed Force.
5. New organisation for the levy of Recruits.

1811.

XI.

January 13th.

Never wishing to do anything without knowledge and permission, I send to you Jordan, sometime despatch rider and perpetual copyist, with an enclosure

for my Mother, Gûriev* and Count Romanov. The question is this. I am writing to Mother to ask for 150,000 (paper) roubles of my own capital back from the Foundling House; about which, I take it, there will be no difficulty. Also, I am writing to Gûriev to change me 100,000 into ducats, which will make nearly 6,000, and I ask you for leave to send them abroad. I do not take on myself to send such a sum in gold out of the country without your consent. If you do not approve of the step, burn my letter No. 1 to Gûriev; if you do, burn No. 2, but in any case hand hers to Mother, to whom I shall say nothing about the use of the money. I tell you of it because I owe you a faithful account of my smallest step. My purpose is to send the bearer to the Duke.† He will ascertain from Lieven, in Berlin, his whereabouts. The letter to Count Romanov is a request for a passport. I chose this man because an Aide or Despatch Rider might get into difficulties, and God forbid that your uniform should be disgraced through me: whereas for one of my men it's no matter. Do you, if you can, be quick in sending him to Mother; from whom it will go a straight road, without passing through Petersburg again. George does not write, though he knows of this—not intervening out of delicacy. We send this man to the Duke in order always to have a sure person for him to send back, but the money I send to his Secretary, a man he trusts in, and therefore trust the Duke's delicacy will not be hurt, for he is only to give it him in case of urgent necessity, or that of a loan needed, apart from which he will never know anything of my act.

* Dmitri Guriev, afterwards Count, Controller of H.M's Cabinet, and Minister of Finances.

† The reigning Duke Peter of Oldenburg, the Grand Duchess's father-in-law.

27.

January 19th.

I quite recognised your tender heart, dear friend, in your behaviour towards the Duke; hence it was No. 1 that I sent on to Gûriev. All is done and Jordan is carrying you your treasures. It only cost me some complaints from Mother on the pinched state of the Foundling Houses. One thing only I doubt—whether the Duke will accept your offer; but that is no reason for keeping him from doing it. I am sure they won't leave him a month at home, and he will have to move. As probably he will accept no compensation, the best he can do will be to come to us, where we shall have the comfort of being able to lavish on him most sincere tokens of affection and esteem. I cannot express to you how I should love to talk to you at these critical junctures. I long to till I choke. Meanwhile I am over head and ears in work: and less than eleven hours a day, not including dinner-time and a short walk, will not suffice for my present daily task. As I like to keep you and George abreast of everything new I add here a little note on changes made in the Army. Thereby George will have to keep order in the Provinces entrusted to him with half a battalion per government, and the same with all the other governments in Russia. Send me some particulars about Yaroslavl and how you spent your time there, what sort of people you found; in short, what opinion of it you brought away. This letter is between George and you. Farewell, dear friend, yours heart and soul for ever.

P.S.—My family is at your feet. I owe it true domestic felicity.

28.

February 8th.

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not want to let your valet go without giving him a line for you. At the same time I thank you for your last by express, which afforded me much pleasure by its contents. I venture to claim I am not unworthy all the devotion you show me in right of that I bear you, and which will end only with my life. How dearly I would have paid to have only a few minutes' colloquy with you. But I nowise despair of getting to Tver by the last sledging.

I hope to be able to forward my concerns thereby. The famous passport is with you, so the Chancellor* assures me, so my soul is at ease. There is only my post who tarries to be gone, but the translation he is to carry to George I had to get redone three times, the two first being incorrect. Thank him for the savings he has made for me, which exceed what I had dared hope for. Chernayev is a despicable beggar, but Sabir a pleasant colonel. That he may become so I have put him for two days into the Preobrajensky, where there is promotion. Afterwards he will be sent on to the Sorinonovsky. The Queen of Golconda† has given place to the pock-marked Princess.

Tell me of your health, and disguise from me nothing.

* Count Nicholas Rumiantsov (1754-1826).

† Countess A. Protassov (1745-1826), extra Maid of Honour and Princess A. Progorovsky (1747-1824), by birth Princess Volkonsky, Lady of Honour.

XII.

TVER,
February 10th.

If you think it is through high spirits that I write to you, you do not know me. I do so because it is my duty to George; being his wife I must not allow any of my people to insult him, and my duty to you because I ought not to have any doubts as to your manner of acting. And I am in the way to have them, as you will see.

In 1809 you wrote George a letter of which I append a copy in so far as it touches the matter in question. As a pendant to this letter, on November 20th of that year you signed the regulations in which (para. 5) is the article I have transcribed. During the whole time that has since passed you have kept your own counsel except as to the *prikazi* which, despite their being sent, the military governor has never put in the paper, and have on all occasions shown your satisfaction to George. To-day he gets by post a letter from Leontiev, fit to wound any man of honour. Who is to blame? You? What is your meaning? To lower the Body of which the Prince is Chief, not by his own doing, but because, despite his objections, you have insisted on it. What Chief is there who can bear to have his subordinates humbled? If he did he would fail in his duty to you, for either he would have no sense of honour or he would make an exception of himself. Such a man would disgrace your livery. If you have changed your mind as to the intended footing of this Body, then you have been wanting in frankness in not saying so to the Prince. Are you displeased with him? We have no reason to believe so, and besides, it would not be fair that the fault of only one should recoil so hardly on a multitude which assuredly serves you with

zeal. Is it lack of seriousness? I have no answer to that count. However it be, after a public reprimand you cannot expect the Prince to be much tempted to keep the post that so unjustly drew it on him, and I think he can in no way prove to you his calmness save by being silent and awaiting your coming to ask you to release him from a post which has partly cost him his health, which involves most unremitting toil, and brings on him unpleasantness of so painful a kind. I don't know if you will believe me or not, but anyhow it is so. I vow he knows nothing of my letter, and its contents, and that, fearing such a step on my part, he even begged of me to do nothing of the sort, and added that he thought he had wrangled enough to maintain the honour of your service, and that he was resolved not to waste another word, but to put himself out of reach of disgrace. It is a minor matter, no doubt, but does not fail to be wounding, in that just at the moment when he is losing his country, and on the eve of seeing his father a wanderer and himself more or less dependent (granting that in this respect a man of honour can ever be so), such a harrowing thing should come on him, and that from the man to whom he has devoted himself heart and soul. Whatever you may feel after reading this letter, you should realise better, by its contents, how good an opinion I have of you, and not accuse me of being led away by my warm feelings. No, I am perfectly calm, though sorely aggrieved, for he I love best in the world is wronged by him I love the next best.

29.

February 15th.

After having read your letter I was for answering it after my fashion, but restrained myself and resolved to let twenty-four hours pass, telling myself that your letter was written on behalf of a being who is all in all to you, and whom you thought had been injured. I am calm now, calmer than you were, for all you may say, when you wrote to me. For, without hearing me, without questioning me, without even apprising yourself of whether what had been written to you is true or false, you judge and condemn me without appeal. Instead of the friend I have been to you and George, I am become his persecutor, or that of his subordinates, and find delight in humiliating them. Such is the light in which I am depicted in your letter: and what will you say if at the end of it all it turns out that I never even thought of such a thing, and that the truth has had to be warped to vent all that Leontiev's letter contains? Would it not have been easier to forbear taking offence and deciding to write me a letter calculated to wound me—above all, when, after the strictest investigation both of my conduct towards you and your husband, and of my thoughts, I can bear witness that never at any time had I any desire but to do you pleasure, and in no respect to cause you pain? Would it not have been easier, I say, to ask me how it was, and, even granting the thing had happened, what could be the reason for it? But I leave it to your own heart to make you feel I should have deserved this last course better than the one you have taken.

Before coming to the point I think it well to tell you what you may chance not to know, but which is none the less for that strict truth. You are wrong in thinking

that the presenting this or that way forms the distinction between military and civil. They present to me after a parade those of the military whose duty it is to be present at parades. The same officers are presented to the Empresses by the Great Chamberlain who has charge of wholesale presentations at Court. All those who are not called on to attend parades are presented to myself by the Great Chamberlain, as are all the officials of the War Department and Office, the Auditor Generals, of whom several are Generals on the active list, wearing sashes, and beyond doubt quite as military as the Body of Engineers of Highways and Bridges. I even exclude from the number all that has to do with the War College and the Book Branches and the Commissariat, as not figuring in the Army List. Accordingly, without meaning any slight to the Engineers of the Highways and Bridges, I should have desired them to be presented by the Great Chamberlain, yet they would have remained none the less on a military footing, as witness Art. 5 of the Ordinance, which had my assent, and which you quote.

So let us see if I can reasonably be saddled with the intention to lower anybody in my service. What benefit or pleasure could I get from it, failing causes for displeasure? And even then it would have to be done in a way known to the whole Empire, which must ring for it to have the desired effect. Thus, having no grudge against the Engineers under George's orders, on the contrary having all grounds for being very content with them, and having made it my business to prove it on all occasions, both by writing and orally, and by granting all the favours George asked me for, how could it be supposed that I suddenly wished to humiliate that Body? At least it is not probable: and would it not have been worth while to ask me how it was, instead of at once and in such an assured manner crediting me with intentions

so little according with my character and my feelings towards George ?

Lastly, to crown the whole matter, it turns out there is not a word of truth in it all. Here is the matter as it stands. The presenting of the Body of Engineers has never yet been regulated. Several of them came of their own accord through the Great Chamberlain: I cannot recall the names of all that did so, but am sure that Potocki was one. Sabrukov,* when you were here, got himself presented by an A.D.C. General, and separately, not with these who come forward after parade. Leontiev,† on coming, applied to the Commandant. The latter has orders never to present anyone who does not come under him. Thus all cavalrymen get presented by my brother, Constantine, the artillery by Müller, the Guards by their senior (lately, it was de Preradovich who performed the function): the quarter-masters by Volkonsky,‡ who commands them in the absence of Suchtelen,§ and so forth. The Commandant only presents minor Officers who have no real Chiefs here. Such is the rule observed. Thus the Commandant refused, and rightly, to present Leontiev. Hereupon, the latter inquires of me through the Military Governor, how he ought to act? I gave him the only answer I could: that the presenting of their corps not having been yet arranged for, at the moment he could only follow the old order in being brought up by the Great Chamberlain, and when I was at Tver I would settle the matter once and for all with George. True enough, I was meaning to tell George to follow the usage laid down for military men, and get the Head of the District or the Senior Officer at Peters-

* Alexander Sabrukov (1783-1857), an Engineer and Lieutenant-General.

† Nicholas Leontiev (1776-1831), Major-General.

‡ Prince Peter Volkonsky, afterwards Master of the Household.

§ Count Peter Suchtelen (1751-1836), General of Engineers.

burg to see to it after the Sunday parade. You see, then, that I never even dreamed of depriving the corps of its privileges. On the contrary, my meaning was to put the thing on the footing always obtaining with regard to officers. I could not get the Governor to perform such a ridiculous task as that spoken of in Leontiev's letter, after I had signed the regulation and these gentry had donned the green sash.

I find it difficult to believe that Balakhov warped what I had said sufficiently to bear out what is quoted. For his part, he swears that he never said anything of the kind, and did nothing but give my answer word for word.

All I can make out of it is that Leontiev has made a *faux pas*. I own that that astonished me, for I have always known him to be the best fellow in the world, unless one credits him with a share of that tendency to folly from which his two brothers suffer, and acutely. But, in any case, I have set forth to you in this long missive the thing as it happened, and I wind up by saying that if I were for making some innovations in the Highways and Bridges, it is not through Balakhov* I should have transmitted my orders. Similarly, if it had been a matter for the Petersburg Police, I should not have turned to George. I beg you to read him this letter, and enjoin both of you, when someone is as well known to you as I ought to be, not to change your opinion of him so readily. I send a mounted post with this letter, for it grieves me that there should be a misunderstanding between us.

* Alexander Balakhov (1770-1837), Police Minister.

XIII.

March 11th.

What answer ought I to have sent you? If you could have seen me when I got your letter, and now that I am writing to you, you would need no word from me. What I feel most of all is grieved at having caused you a moment's annoyance after your noble conduct. I never misjudged you; I should not have written such a letter to one on whose good heart I did not count. You know how to love, so you can tell what one feels when one deems the beloved object aggrieved. This accursed affair earned me a letter from you, well-deserved, and not less poignant reproaches from George.

Be that as it may, my motive was a pure one; it will serve as my apology. I could not hold back for an instant what I have in my heart against you; the kindness shown by you in doing as much shames me still more. It is a strong lesson, but will be effectual. The post came at two, and will start again to-morrow morning, for I am anxious to know whether my present shortcoming has not wiped out the constant and sincere proofs of a most true affection. I ask you one favour, that of a word in answer to this matter, which I have so greatly at heart.

30.

March 23rd.

DEAR FRIEND,

Mother has given me a letter from the Duke, March 23rd inst., at Berlin, telling me he is going to betake himself to Russia. Hence he will meet Colonel

Chernichev* and thus hasten still more his journey here. Although mother told me she had sent you an express with the copy of this letter, yet, as I so promised, I send you a *Feldjäger* (despatch-rider). At the same time, dear, I cannot sufficiently tell you how touched I am by all the affection you have shown me and the letter received the morning after my reaching here. Fancy, I made the journey in 27 hours ! You say we started at a quarter to two, and I reached Tsarskoe Selo next morning at a quarter to five. That is rapid travelling, I think. I am writing from at home, and my spouse and child are at your feet, and thank you for your gracious remembrance. Farewell, dear friend. I make a holiday of seeing you again. Heart and soul all yours for life. I embrace George, whom I also love from the bottom of my heart.

P.S.—A *King of Rome* is born. The tidings came to-day. Great illumination at the Ambassador's.

31.

April 25th.

Assuredly I thought you mad enough, but not to that extent ! Short of losing ordinary understanding, how can I change towards your friend, and what has he done to incur my displeasure ? I thought you more fair to me, and hoped I had given you proofs that I am not of a changeable nature. But enough of this, and, having scolded you, I must tell you that I love you to distraction, despite your madness, and am longing to see you again. After having flown like one possessed, I hope to unbend delightfully in your

* Alexander Chernichev, afterwards Count and Prince, and Minister of War.

arms, and pass at your side some days as delightful as those of my last visit. I pledge you my word that I greatly need them. They will restore balm to my soul, which is laden for a thousand various reasons. How good of you, my dear, to take an interest in my children! Thank God, the measles have passed off well, but the mother makes me uneasy. All the winter she has been spitting blood, and this will not stop for any remedies, so that I am obliged to let her go away to Carlsbad, which cured her for the first time for several years. Being far from you, I picture myself all alone a good part of the coming summer, until you shall make your appearance. I mean by "alone," without anyone with whom I care to unbosom myself, and give my soul play. You who know me and my habits and affections will easily understand. In fact, I am waiting for Tver more impatiently than I can say. That will solace me for a long while. Valûev has not arrived; I am reserving for him a good scolding. I am now going to jump into bed, for I have finished, giving you a thousand kisses on each of your bichky (cheeks), which must be more delightful than ever. I love both them and you always the same.

XIV.

May.

I flatter myself, dear friend, that you will do justice to the motive which made me delay answering your letter which the Duke brought me.

Out of delicacy, certainly not from choice, I forbade myself to write to you, postponing it to a convenient season. The express you sent to George with your

kind birthday letter coming back empty-handed from Moscow supplied the means. Your affection for me and George is a great part of my happiness; in return we can only offer you very devoted hearts. Let us now come to the point, which is the Duke. You know him, and can gauge his gratitude for your way of treating him. These are not mere words; I submit to your decision the state of the question without prejudice. Be pleased to pass judgment on him; adopt, modify or reject what I am going to put before you. His position ought to be determined by three factors—war, peace at least for eight or ten months, and his private monetary affairs. I say nothing of a further point, the giving back of the Duchy, a plan which would satisfy all concerned. In the first case, if the two empires go to war the Duke's activity for Russia would cease as a matter of course, but would only take a different aspect, for, as you have said, he would be called on to work for the public good. This war, weighing the chances, would take place after the harvesting, *i.e.* in September. If it is to come then, by July the movements of the armies of Germany and Spain should certainly give warning of it. In the second contingency, peace, it is assuredly needed on all grounds that the Duke should make a choice which will settle his future as long as he stays in Russia, but that choice depends on the third point, his private pecuniary affairs. You know, perhaps, that personally he is very rich, his wealth amounting to 500,000 Holstein crowns, or, at present rate, perhaps about two million roubles, but the money is placed with private people. When he left he gave orders to get in as much as might be, but for the moment he knows of no sum having come in, except 50,000 crowns, which have not yet reached him. It is possible the whole fortune, or at least a great portion, may be got back, but in face of

events it is also very likely it may not, and if so he would find himself master of no more than he brought away with him, a sum enough for his needs in private life, but not in that for which you were kind enough to intend him. He knows you have been kind enough to take upon you all that is for show, but apart from his personal wants he has obligations towards his servants over there whom he cannot desert, and they are more for them than for himself, as you will soon learn. The Duke having asked my opinion on these different scores, I ventured to advise him to wait for July before a final decision, as that month will decide whether we shall have war, and as it is far enough off for him to hear of the recovery of his money. However, Prince Z. having passed through the day before yesterday, the various plans and decisions will take about a fortnight. Towards that date your journey is to take place, according to general rumour, a journey which, taking you, according to the same, into the Polish provinces, must affect more than one decision. It seems to me, then, that if the Duke waited here till you came back, and went to Petersburg in the second half of June, he would still have time to make various arrangements there if events favoured his acceptance of the post at Moscow. And in July he could decide finally. In whatever direction he may turn his steps, I myself hope he may carry out his plan; if his means do not allow him to accept the brilliant post you offered him, I urge him to the utmost to prefer his children and their abode to any other. Such, dear friend, is a faithful account of our talk together. I fancy its contents can only displease you, and you will yourself feel it to be foolish to launch out without knowing if you can continue. The Crown Prince, however, is at your orders, as soon as Napoleon declares he will not give back the Duchy.

The young man has to make a career for himself; he is quite differently placed from his father. The one has now no duty but to himself, while the other is bound to beings who, having shared his good fortune, must still more be sharers of his ill fortune. After such a long epistle, I think I can do nothing better than give my love, but if you will have patience for a minute I will tell you that our city has quite won Papa's heart, that we are going to work, that days of public outing have been arranged which the Lord somewhat impolitely amuses himself by upsetting, and that every evening the Million and the Vauxhall bring people together and there is fun. Do not forget your friends, and come soon to see them. They wait impatiently for you.

32.

ST. PETERSBURG,
July 3rd.

Your last two letters, dear, kind friend, gave me even more pleasure than usual, by showing me you are not angry with me for my slowness in answering, as I had feared. To know you were displeased with me would hurt me cruelly, for the feeling I have for you is no ordinary affection, and it is really heart and soul that I cling to you. But let us come to the point, that is, the answers I owe you. In the first place, when you come here you will be very welcome, and received with open arms by your very humble servant, who will be beyond measure glad to see you again. I cannot think of travelling before the end of July, for reasons too long to set forth, and best kept to tell you of by word of

mouth. Now, a word on my slowness in answering. It is due to the news from Paris and my accident : from one day to another I hoped to be able to report to you something more definite, so as to end the irresolution of the Duke. Then my accident twice compelled me to remain prostrate for several days. After that came a totally trivial post from Prince Kûrakin on the opening of the Corps Legislatif and the baptism of the King of Rome, but reporting the early coming of despatches from France to the ambassador : and as Cunlaincourt had already returned to Paris at the time, and taken with him all possible explanations on my part, it was reasonable to suppose this express would be bringing some more decided replies. This messenger has just arrived, but I have reason to feel, after a talk which the envoy had with my Châncellor, that they keep saying the same thing, to wit, that they want us at all hazards to point out what we want as indemnity for the Duke. And I, faithful to the principle I have adopted, keep replying *ad nauseam* that I want only what the Treaty of Tilsit lays down. Thus you see that things remain almost at the same point, and that is what I always foresaw.

July 5th.

I had got so far when I was interrupted, and had not time yesterday to take up the pen again. I go back to the Duke's affairs. As said above, I have always been sure that people will only drag out the discussions, and that nothing will result. This complexion of things seems to have authorised the Duke to expect no more, and to accept the sort of asylum I have offered him. He has decided that it is better to wait for fear of risking the capital he has in Germany. I have only one thing to remark :

that I think he and the Hereditary Prince should make their conduct tally, for if the Duke thinks a post in Russia can bring about a sort of revulsion on the part of Napoleon against him and his property—which I must own is not impossible—the same result must be feared from any step of the Hereditary Prince's as to contravening the laws of the Confederation of the Rhine. That is why I have thought best to suspend the Prince's nomination until the Duke shall have made up his mind to expect no more from France, and shall feel free of all consideration towards that country, a result which to my mind is the only one that can be determined on. For what can reasonably be hoped of Napoleon? Is he the man to relinquish a gain unless driven to do so by force of arms? And have we the means to force him so to do? Thus it seems to me more reasonable to hope for a remedy for the malady of the age of like force with that malady, for such is it that I cannot get away from the conviction that the present state of things cannot last, and that the suffering in all classes, alike in Germany and France, is so great that patience cannot fail to become exhausted.

At Paris there is great turmoil, and recently a young man fired a carbine at him, the bullet of which grazed his cheek. Seeing he had missed, the former shot himself with a pistol he had ready for the purpose. Such self-sacrifice will have admirers and imitators. Well, though it does not become a mortal to prophesy, I stand convinced that this state of things must come to an end one way or the other. Until then we must make up our minds that nothing will be obtained of the man, and shape things accordingly. Such is my opinion. That, my dear, seems to me an answer to all the things you have asked in your letters. The rest can be said by word of mouth, and dealt with accordingly. It will be a real delight to me

to see you again, and I look forward to the time with impatience. Meanwhile, that you may not be idle, I send you the printed plans for the new modelling of the Senate on the great scale of which you know, and of which we have often spoken, as it was put before the Council for discussion. Only a single change was made in it. You remember my idea was always to make the Senate purely a judicial body, and that is what you will see carried out in the framing of the Judicial Senate. My intention was to transfer all administrative functions of the old Senate to the Cabinet of Ministers, as to a body comprising genuinely all the elements of administration. But afterwards, after thinking all these things well over, and remembering how people cling to the old names, modes and usages, I found that I could very well combine these things by giving the Committee of Ministers the old function of controlling the Senate the more easily in that all Ministers have always been Senators, and it has always rested with me to fill up the Departments of the Senate from such members as I thought fit. Hence precisely the work that was done by the first section of the Senate, which was the only administrative section, is going to be done by convocation of the same ministers as my great scheme laid down, but under the style of Controlling Senate, much as was instituted by Peter the Great, of which the new shape will be much nearer to the present Senate, which departed far from it in the following reigns. In this way I think I have combined two things greatly needed, bringing about the reform I desire, while keeping the old exterior. After which I will send George the complete ordinance for the ministers, which he already has in the scheme drawn up at the Council. So also the modelling of the Ministry of Police. That of the Finances is being printed, and the others will follow. As this letter

is for him as much as for you, I ask the pair of you for your opinion on its contents. Tell the Duke I thank him much for his letter; that I read with great interest what he was good enough to write for me, and that I leave it to him to send it or to bring it with him when you come to us. A thousand thanks, my dear, for your kindnesses to my little family, which is at your feet, and much touched by your remembrance. They are off in a few days to bathe at Odessa, and I shall be left alone. Although I do not like that much, I am the first to wish it for the good of their health. Farewell, my dear, kind friend. This is a sufficiently long epistle. My love to George with all my heart. Many greetings to Augustus. Heart and soul yours for life.

P.S.—Here is a letter from Aunt. That you may judge of the emptiness of Napoleon's offers and pledges, I append Kûrakin's last despatch on the Duke's affairs.

XV.

July 11th.

I wrote to you yesterday, friend, but the Duke leaving us, I cannot refrain from taking the chance to thank you again for all your kindness, and to speak to you of him. After having thought the matter over again, he is very determined, unless you decide otherwise, to decline the Moscow post. There is much to be said for and against it. It would be a good thing to prove to France that one is above any hurt it can inflict, but again, *having already struck the Duke out of the Almanac (de Gotha for 1811), which proves clearly that he is no longer one of the Sovereign Princes*, France may regard this appointment of the Duke as a provision, and perhaps strip him

of his last possessions, though to my thinking these will be safe as long as the two Courts do not fall out, for if Napoleon had known the way the seizure of Oldenburg would be looked at, I believe he would not have done it. Moreover, it is to be feared that placing him even here may be regarded as a provision, and cause the main object to be forgotten, likewise make it thought that the guarantee of the Empire is discharged. It seems to me that the Duke's great desire is to be *turned to account* in order to serve the cause of Russia hereafter, and thereby that of Germany, and above all prove to you his zeal and devotion. The post at Moscow requiring much display, which is the most essential thing for its expected effect on the public mind, the Duke finds the contrast shocking,* and does not feel inclined to endure that sort of *puppet* existence. I, personally, have been assailed by a dread, to wit, that in his own country, on learning he has such a brilliant post, they may misconstrue his intention and think he has deserted his cause. You would incur great expense without pleasing either yourself or him, who, new to the office, and not knowing the people, would serve an irksome apprenticeship not useful to his chief aim. According to the latest news we may hope that the Duke can draw out his capital. You may be sure that his interest is set apart for bounden obligations, and to enable him to live in retirement. Such, I believe, is his aim; we are constantly disputing as to the place. All tends, to my mind, to its being with us, and we count on your glibness to further our cause. I thought it my duty to set forth to you all these reasons in writing so as to put an end to a vacillation of four months' length. You know the people concerned, hence to talk to you of their gratitude would

* In the draft, after "done it," stands "now bound down by a *senatus consultum*, he is not the man to keep from it."

be useless : one cannot be and yet not be ; they would have to cease to exist not to feel it. I spoke to you in mine of yesterday of the Hereditary Prince ; settle that in your wisdom.

XVI.

August 27th.

Although you make nothing of your birthdays, we care about them ; that is why we send back the bearer that he may be there in time to carry you our good wishes, dear friend. They go out from hearts that are wholly yours, as much by proofs given as by gratitude. Rejoice that your beneficent plans are crowned with success : at the bottom of your heart you should often, the will being the essence in everything, accept our miserable little offering, which may be useful to you to keep down your piles of papers. As we do nothing without your knowledge, we report that George has had plans drawn of Trisviatsky, and got them to give him the history of the fief, which he sends you. The plans, however, go to Papa that he may see if that can suit him. His final answer will be forwarded you at once and the plans sent. You, who know the Duke, if you think about it, will see we cannot act otherwise, given the circumstances. It is as well as can be, but bad in itself. One must count on your kindness, as you have bidden us do, to act so audaciously. Our sole right is based on the talk we had together at Peterhof. Since we came away we don't know if the aspect of things has not changed. Understand us and forgive : it is very hard to hold a just mean between two people you love, and to whom our confidence is equally one, in a

matter where the delicacy of the one should be the opposite way to that of the other. Apart from the order to the plans, which he alone could give, George must be distressed, although he finds Trisviatsky very much to the point. We are grieving at the talk of your journey having wholly died down.

I embrace you, heart and soul.

XVII.

September 5th.

I forgive you, for you cannot be resisted ; the mutual mothers kiss your hands. Now, however, I am going to put a punishment on you, that is, to tell you of your grievous sins. (1) For nearly two years my Princess has been training me for nothing ; put that right and let me know ; (2) my little despatch-rider, who, I vow, is a gallant lad ; (3) a little nephew of Lulke's, whose name Gagarin will tell you, for I have forgotten it. Let us come to the everlasting business of Papa. I no longer know what you want, all of you : I begged the Duke when the plans were sent to end the matter with you and let me know what had been decided. He answers that he does not want Trisviatsky for many reasons he enumerates, and which are partly delicate scruples and partly reasonable : in short, he tells me to look for a property. I think, then, that it is with your knowledge he declines, and am after Glebov's place, which is a splendid one : up to now I have no tidings of the lady ; I have told Aisenied to get information as if for himself. I tell you this in confidence, for Papa would never forgive me if he knew I had told you out of delicacy.

I beg you to settle the affair of Trisviatskoe (*sic*) between yourselves, for I make nothing of it. But what George does humbly beg of you is not to send Ruosky here: it would be a thunderclap for Rossi, with whom he is quite satisfied, and who is zealous and active beyond belief. You would overwhelm us, for certainly Rossi would leave, and that would be an irreparable loss: besides, we think he has not forfeited your favours. Our journey has been very pleasant, particulars when I see you for fear of wearying you with a long letter. How I love you with all my heart, you know. I was never vexed, you wrong me in thinking so. George and I embrace you, heart and soul.

33.

November 10th.

I begin, dear, kind friend, by reporting—
(1) Brunner is promoted; (2) the page has a place; (3) the Princess has her wages. I think that is all. So now let me tell you that you are the best creature on earth for having considered a man who, if he has an hour a day to take fresh air, thinks himself very lucky. Never yet have I led such a dog's life. Many times in the week I rise from my bed to sit down at my desk, and leave it only to snatch a morsel by myself and go back to it again till it is bedtime. Such is my day, but I am not Ambroise. Admit that that savours of Narishkin and his shows. You send me messages I am idle not to come and see you. Ah! if I only could have you would not have had to ask me twice. Not only would it have been a real delight to me, but I can avow *it would be a refreshment*. We are on the constant alert. All condi-

tions are so thorny, matters so strained that hostilities may break out from one moment to another. I cannot get away from my centre of guidance and activity; I must wait for a more favourable moment or maybe the war will prevent me altogether. Perhaps if God grant us good tidings from the Danube you could make a trip here: as soon as I know something more definite I shall talk to you more at length.

The Trisviatskoe business is easily explained, my dear. The Duke said not a word when you bade him do so, so much so that till I got your letter I remained convinced it was a settled matter. Having spoken to him, it turns out he does not want it and is looking for a seat to buy. As soon as you find one which suits, tell me and the price of it, and the matter will be settled beforehand.

At this point these lines are for George, whom I thank warmly for the readiness he showed in viewing in person the Cebege situation, and above all that you troubled to go there yourself. Be sure nothing escapes me, and you have not to do with an ingrate. As a rule, I am most satisfied with the way George carries out the jobs he is trusted with. Fonder of him than I am I could not be. As for you, miss, if you care a little for a brother you once loved, I will tell you that, despite all the toil he is overloaded with, he loves you with all the powers of his soul, and it is a real pain not to be able to go and see you and spend some days as I did the three that I was with you. That's enough of my chatter! Farewell, dear friend; don't forget me altogether, and tell yourself it is heart and soul I am yours for life. A small kiss to the boy.

XVIII.

No Date.

You wrote to me, kind friend, to tell you the price of the seat the Duke wants to buy. Let me off it, for I cannot : it would be unlike him and me, if I told you. Besides it is not his object to make a stroke, he only wants to place his capital securely and so as to use none. I had spoken to you of Mme. Glebov's seat, but it is not for sale. Now it is that of Mr. Tutotumi that he wants to get, and to which there is no other hindrance than a matter before the Senate he has over it. This is a good office, that is, matter for experts. It is only a question of asking you to tell the Senate to settle the matter at once. I am not now thinking of asking you to intervene in a judicial matter, but from what they all say, and my own thinking, you quite well can do so. The Duke is much tempted by the bargain, as it is for mere nothing, and the property very fine. The only hitch is this business. Also kindly issue a decree giving him the right to buy, for not being a Russian subject he cannot without an express permit. Be so good as to make haste, for he is eager to have a roof of his own : the weather is such as to let him set it up forthwith.

34.

November 21st.

It is to offer you my most tender felicitations, dear friend, that I indite these lines to you. My wishes for your welfare are abiding and cannot be warmer one day than another. I envy Papa's fate, who is making for that happy Tver which is so still and quiet. As for

me, I am forced to remain at this accursed anvil, where for all the pains one may take there is always more left to be done than you can succeed in finishing. It is a sort of task of the Danaids. Since the summer I am, as it were, on sentry, and as, unhappily, there is no one to relieve me, I am like the sentinels of the Tsarevich Ivan—but I forget you are not of the old gang, and having been still at the breast you don't remember all that. Meanwhile, I expect in a week's time my little family, which I lay at your feet. Alas! I cannot use my ancient rights (it's your feet are in question, *do you hear?*) to imprint the most tender kisses in your bedroom at Tver. This said, farewell, madam, have good fun, but don't forget the poor convicts at Petersburg.

35.

December 14th.

Although I have only a moment, dear, kind friend, I cannot let this post go without thanking you a thousand and a thousand times for your kind letters, and the charming present sent me. All that comes from you has a genuine value for me, and what I say is not merely words. The permit for the purchase of the land and house is, as is reasonable, granted very willingly, for with us everybody has the right to do it without any leave. Believe that I feel in all the force of the term the painfulness there must sometimes be about your position. A thousand greetings to Papa and George.

My little family is at your feet: we are together again, and I am as happy as man can be domestically. Yours, heart and soul.

36.

PETERSBURG,
December 18th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

It is my brother who takes charge of these lines. A thousand thanks for your nice letters by Marin* and your cousins.† Your affection is necessary to my happiness; let that assurance never fail you. I believe every time I am with you again a fresh tie will be added to those that already bind me to you. That is what happened this time; for heaven's sake never by the post put anything important in your letters; above all, not a word about the Martinists! On the other hand, by express always speak to me quite frankly. That is the rule I shall follow, too. Yours, heart and soul for life. A thousand greetings to the male.

37.

December 24th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I benefit by the leaving of Wokhriakov to express to you all my gratitude for the charming present you have sent for my birthday, and which gave me such pleasure as I cannot utter. Firstly, it is delightful in itself, then it recalls to me a spot that I love so, and again, it comes to me from a being I love beyond all saying. Let me thank you also, dear sweet friend, for all your letters and the affection you display to me in them. Assure yourself it is indispensable to my happiness. That I enjoy in my little household, and the affection you and George show me, are the only delights

* Serge Marin (1776-1813), A.D.C. to His Majesty, known as a satirist, Colonel of the Preobrajensky Regiment.

† Duke Eugene of Württemberg.

of my existence, for the rest is rather a disappointment. Do not blame me, dear friend, if I write to you but seldom, but I may not rose-colour; these devilish politics go from bad to worse, and the infernal being who is the curse of the human race becomes from day to day more abominable. Tell dear George from me I have always wanted to ask him for an explanation about Priklonsky. It seems to me we had agreed he should go into the frogs* as Colonel, and that at the first chance I am to make him Major-General. If that is so, George has only to answer me by galloper, and I will put it in the order of the day. I will write to you one of these days more at length by an express.

Farewell, dear sweet friend; heart and soul for life. My little family is at your feet, and offers you its deep gratitude for remembering it.

1812.

38.

January 18th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I benefit by the leaving of your cousin to recall myself to your memory, and thank you for your nice letters. It is with the liveliest joy I learnt the news of your pregnancy, and pray most sincerely all may go well. The commission you trusted to me, dear, as to where you should be confined is not an easy one, for even granting me succeeding in making it in your house you may be certain beforehand that Mother will come and fix herself there, so that to my thinking you will

* Alluding to the green line of the facings of the Corps of Highways and Bridges.

gain very little. You know already the small accident that happened in my house. Ere long no trace of it will be seen; the hangings and movables were saved, and all the damage is no more than two or three ceilings spoiled and to be redone. I am more like a sentinel than ever, for the horizon grows darker and darker.

Farewell, dear friend, I conjure you to be careful of yourself. Assure yourself that one of the things I feel most is being so long without seeing you. All yours, heart and soul for life. Embrace George a thousand times for me. My little family is at your feet.

39.

PETERSBURG,

January 29th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I write these lines to you by Constantine to let you know how greatly I am affected by all your letter by Marin contains. It is impossible to be more touched than I am, and assure yourself that your feelings toward me form an essential part of my happiness. It is with delight and gratitude I should have accepted your friendly offer to come here, but there are the grounds that keep me from doing so. You know I had to protest against all that has been done towards the Duke; unpleasant explanations might result from this, and the consequence be war. Now, I should not like you and George to look as if you had come here to ask favours for the Duke, and that it should be laid to your charge that you had fomented the quarrel: with a public like ours this result is more than probable, the more as the conduct of both of you ought to be quoted as a model of delicacy. With this goes another factor. I have occasion

to go around, and my visit to Tver will serve as a pretext for leaving Petersburg, and, after having been with you some days, instead of going straight back, I shall make my tour. Thus that will lessen the effect abroad that my leaving for anywhere but Tver would infallibly produce.

Before concluding, I will make some remarks on your answer as to the half-battalions I set on foot in the governments. You think them insufficient. But admit at least that it is more than now, for certainly no real company will be able to muster more than 50 men, and I warrant these half-battalions will have 300 always there. Add that in the adjacent government, there will be as many. Accordingly, suppose that in any government there is disturbance too serious for 300 men to deal with, the half-battalions of the neighbouring governments can be employed at once. For instance, the government of Tver is bounded by those of Novgorod, Pskov, Simbersk, Moscow, Vladimir, and Yaroslavl, hence it is not 300 men but 2,100 that can be called in, whereas at this moment there is nothing. Hereafter I purpose to add to this enrolment that of the veterans of each town in the district; it is being worked out now, and I hope to bring it you at Tver. Farewell, dear kind friend, I think I love you more every day. All messages to George, and do not forget me. My folks are at your feet.

40.

ST. PETERSBURG,
February 22nd.

DEAR KIND FRIEND,

Bartolomei being off to Tver-land, I take the opportunity to thank you a thousand times for your late

letters, and tell you that despite the bitter-sweet which pervades my Mother's letter to George, that epistle proves to me that you judged the matter more rightly than I, for I thought it would not serve you much if you set up in your own house and folks would follow you there. By that letter it seems you have gained the great point, and that you will have some days at least to yourself, if, as remains to be seen, minds are not changed before then. Unhappily, I shall not gain much by it all, for most probably by that time I shall not be at Petersburg. All the signs point to war, although on our part there is no longer the least pretext they can put forward against us. You can fancy how such a prospect justly distresses me, but now this sense must give way to that of duty. I have at least the consolation of having done all that was compatible with honour to avoid the struggle; at present it boots to prepare for it with courage and trust in God. The latter is stronger in me than ever, and I bow resignedly to His decrees. One thing I feel more than I can say is not seeing you any more at this time: be sure my affection for you will only end with my life. My family is at your feet.

P.S.—I believe I forgot to write to George to send here an officer named Rössing, who served in the Duke's troops, and another whose name I have forgotten, his comrade. The Duke has suggested to me to employ them under Amschild. Wholly yours, heart and soul. Tell George to get very exact information as to Sumarokov, Governor* of Vitebsk. He wants to shift to another government: if he is any good perhaps George might like him at Novgorod? All depends on what he tells me.

* Paul Sumarokov, transferred in 1812 to Novgorod, where he remained till 1815, and later became Senator. He is celebrated as having dared to brave Arakchiév.

41.

PETERSBURG,
March 2nd.

I cannot refrain, dear sweet friend, from showing you all the happiness I feel in learning at this moment that your child is saved.* Yester evening I had not the heart to write to you. Who better than I can feel what you must have experienced.

It is from the bottom of my heart I return thanks to Divine goodness, and I cannot express to you all the joy I experience. Would you were immune from such trials! But I cannot help telling you that the resignation your letter to Mother breathes did real good to my heart. That that feeling may never quit yours is the prayer of your true friend, who rejoices when he sees you on this right and only path. Farewell, dear sweet friend, to love you more than I do were impossible. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life. My family is at your feet. It only knows ill news and is aghast at them. I am going to hasten to teach it some goodness. I send you a despatch-rider.

XIX.

March 25th.

Knowing us as you do, you can easily understand, dear friend, the occasion of this journey of George's. His plea is business, his motive to testify to you, at this critical juncture as always, his zeal and devotion. He wishes to serve. Instead of dissuading, I wholly applaud him. As he wears uniform he owes it to others, as a

* Alexander, the Grand Duchess's first-born son.

man of birth he owes it to himself. His request seems to me very modest, but on that you will decide. He is ready to obey you in everything, but do not ask him to stay in the peaceful post where he now is and hold aloof from a cause which, apart from being his own, has become that of every honourable being. Besides, he owes so much to you and to Russia that his wish to be of use at this momentous juncture becomes a duty. If George gets this permission as soon as he is back here we shall both start off to be with you again; I have that, too, much at heart. I say nothing to you of events or chances, all my prayers are for your happiness. Do not fear for me, though you know George is in danger: I would rather he should do what he ought than see him useless owing to me, at a time when whoever has the shadow of heart should wish to serve. Enough of this, the rest will come by mouth.

To love you more than I do is impossible. Till we meet.

XX.

April 15th.

Here I am once more, pen in hand, my friend, and this time it is a matter of what is dearest in the world to me. George takes these lines to you. To recommend any soul is against my principles, but you know this one. All I beg of you is to rest assured that there is no one, aye, no one in creation who is more devoted to you than he. I ask of you a little friendship and trust in him. My very life depends on him; would that I could again prove it him on this occasion. However, Providence wills it otherwise. Trust me for not doing

anything foolish, but, after my confinement, do not begrudge me the solace of going to him if but for a moment. You who know the happiness of a home and ours in particular will understand what passes in my soul. Do not blame me for it. Be pleased to bid your riders always warn George of their going. Keep well.

XXI.

April.

After having turned over in my head whether I should speak to you or not, despite my hatred of increasing the number of your petitioners, I yet believe I am acting to your wish in warning you that you have, without meaning it, caused great pain to the Duke. He is truly in despair, seeing many things I do not see and others I would fain he did not see. He thinks himself dishonoured in that the invasion of his country was the first cause of the rupture between the two empires : he thinks it a point of honour that he should fight for his own cause, quoting the example of the French princes with the English army. He had long thought you were indifferent, now he is sure of it : it is most of all the part where you spoke of your trust in him which, as it is not there, makes him regard the rest as no more well founded and its emptiness only too well avouched. I do not know what he is after, he turns vague plans in his head, his wish is to leave the country, I gather. I urge him not to desert our cause, he thinks he personally injures it ; above all, he is deeply hurt because he, having wished to prove to you his personal attachment, you did not receive him cordially. He rejoins to the comment you make that he might be the mark for the shafts of

calumny, that the point exists legally with this difference, that if he stays where he is they will be able not only to accuse him of having fanned the fire of discord, but not even having the courage to risk his person where his own existence is at stake.

I have told you what I think. It is extremely sad to see you misunderstood, and two people at variance whose hearts are made to be in accord. Do not think I am reciting a palinode : I wish to make it plain to you and beg you to relieve, in as far as you can, a plight that is all the more regrettable in that the victim is thoroughly respectable. Be that as it may, his preparations will keep him four to six weeks before he can get under way. Forgive this long letter. It is needless to tell you neither the Duke nor any living soul knows of this letter, of course, excepting George, so keep it secret. Thursday or Friday he will be at Vilna. Both of us embrace you heart and soul.

42.

VILNA,
April 19th.

Many thanks, dear sweet friend, for your two kind letters : you know what pleasure all that hails from you gives me. I pitied you from the bottom of my heart as I thought of your parting from George. I know by my own experience what such moments cost one. For any's sake take care of yourself, and no follies of any kind. I am exceedingly touched by George's conduct in asking through Creighton whether my dame would not write to me : I shall thank him myself. I could not refrain from letting you know how much it affected me.

All you tell me in your last letter about the Duke distresses me much. But what can I do? If people want to see things otherwise than they are it is hard to help it; at least, if you know, anyways point them out to me. You remember you and George agreed with me on the undesirability of having the Duke with the army until matters have taken a more decided turn, one that may render his presence useful. You urged me to give my opinion frankly to the Duke: you even said he was waiting for it, owing to the delay in my answering, and that he was ready to fall in strictly with my ideas.

I could not do otherwise than act up to my sincere conviction. It appears now that the Duke is wounded: I am sorry, but, once again, what can I do? Speak to me on the point quite candidly. Yours, heart and soul, for life.

43.

VILNA,
April 24th.

At last, dear friend, George arrived in perfect health day before yesterday. The sight of him gave me the sincerest pleasure. He gave me your two letters, dear, both of which touched me deeply. I feel all the grief the loss of Alexandrine must have caused you, and you know how much I take to heart all that concerns you. May the Supreme Being give you the courage needful to brace yourself against such shocks! The second touched me in quite a different fashion. I felt keenly all you must have gone through in parting with George, and if ever anyman can count on my friendship it is indeed he, for he cannot be loved more tenderly or truly than by me. Hence all I can do for my part to prove it to

him will not be lacking. As to your coming here after your confinement, it is too much my gain for me to go against it : it will be a time of real happiness to me, but make it right in time with Mother, for it is from that quarter the difficulties come. With us, thank God, all is well, and we are all in the best cases possible. Farewell, dear sweet friend, think of a brother who is tenderly devoted to you. Heart and soul, wholly yours for life.

44.

VILNA,
May 4th.

Many thanks, dear sweet friend, for your letters of the 23rd, 25th, and 27th, which I got on my return here. Your affection does me real good. There is none better than you, and what I feel for you has a touch of passion about it. Do not laugh at me, it is precisely true. I was very pleased with my trip, and the troops are splendid. Here is the letter you sent me from Aunt. On reading it, I plainly saw it was not for me, but neither is it for you. But for whom is it then, you will say ? I fancy it is for Marie. Dear Aunt seemingly wrote to the whole family at the same time and mixed up the covers foolishly. I therefore place it in your hands to get it to Marie, explaining the matter to her.

I found out that folks wanted to put their noses into my letters, and well before getting yours. I told my body servant to carry my letters to you, and only to deliver them there when you are alone. Meanwhile, I will also turn George to account as you bid me. Farewell, dear and sweet friend, yours, heart and soul, for life.

45.

VILNA,
May 22nd.

What merit is there, dear friend, in my loving you and George? You remember that the fancied Beaure sings—"All will be sure to love you as long as you merit their love." Now no one can deserve love more than you two, seeing which I love you with all my heart.

If they take you to Gatchina, I mean to tell Pavlovsky, which I can hardly believe. I do not fancy it will be for long, for things must come to a head in a few days one way or the other. As yet, however, nothing new, but we are all ready to sustain the attack.

Farewell, dear friend, retain your affection for me, which does me so much good, and believe me for life wholly yours, heart and soul.

XXII.

May.

I received your letter, kind friend, and thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. Your affection is very dear to me; if only I could show my attachment to you as I should wish. True, I can boast my wisdom, the depth of the soul concerns no one, I am far from George and the loss sustained is one of those never forgotten: that being was not of this world. Much obliged at your asking me news of the little one: he improves every day. As for the Duke, I do not know what to say, my letter on that head containing all that serve as an answer to the one you wrote him. I can only add that he is in a very grievous plight, alone, deserted,

to some extent idle, he who is used to do so much, feeling that his dearest interests are at stake and that without his being as it were in it, not seeing any limit even to his passive state at the moment, feeling he has talents as a politician and being even sure he has some as a soldier, convinced of your indifference and boasting, moreover a heart vigorous far above his age: you will grant me all that must render him but little content, in fact, unhappy, and he is so. What you have to do it is not mine to tell you, for much as I should wish to your behoof that you should consult him politically, as little should I like to see him galloping to the outposts. If you do not think him of use to you it is not I that wish you to employ him, for the things that are against the grain are ill done and confidence cannot be given. If you want him you alone can decide in what way; the "when" is the great point, for he is fretting himself, and if it cannot be soon I shall be the first to recommend him a journey in the interior of the country. *Here* he cannot remain, everything kills him. Do not take and say I put him wholly on your hands and walk away. No, but in God's Name, what do you want me to say? He is eating himself up, gnawing himself, and it is not in my power to make him believe in any change for the better, for he is too much assured of your indifference. I can only say the same things to you over again. I append to this long missive a prayer. You know how indiscreet Mother is; I received your letter in her room—she gave me hers, I had to do as much. George's only are respected, for they dare not ask me for them, which was not the case with yours, which it has been made plain to me they *always want to see*. Be so good, then, if you do not want her always to see them, to address them to George. It is the only way to get them respected. I embrace you heart and soul.

46.

VILNA,
May 28th.

DEAR KIND WORTHY FRIEND,

Prince Dlini (the Long), in whatever sense you take it, being off to happy Petersburg, I appoint him to be my mouthpiece—not political, but sentimental—to you whom I love more every day. A moment ago I got your kind letter of the 25th, and kiss your hands a thousand times for it. George's friendship makes me truly happy, for I love him from the bottom of my soul, but I will tell you, too, that Augustus pleases me more every day. It is therefore *a sincere affection* arising between us, for it is sure that *next to* George he is the best of beings.

I will tell you that what grieves me sorely is the thought that your Papa, whom I respect so and love, I may say, truly misunderstands and is suspicious of me. If ever you succeed in overcoming this and bringing us together you will do a good work. George showed me all the *news* from your part: I begin to think I am growing better, for, instead of making me laugh, that saddened me to the bottom of my soul. I wrote with a view to prevent *their* going to Pavlovsky, I don't know what effect it will have. I indite these lines to you after a delightful nap, having come back from a round of 60 miles, 20 of them on horseback, leaving at 5 in the morning and driving by the way at ten. For all that I feel in the freshest mood, and am going to get to horse again to make a fresh reconnoissance. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

XXIII.

No Date.

Deliverer arrived yesterday, and though he told me he had no letters from you, despite your meaning to write me, I found a delightful one in George's bundle which gave me frantic pleasure, and I ask leave to embrace you on your nose. I am delighted at your conjugate the verb "to love" with my men who are good fellows altogether, and for fidelity outdo the very dogs. As for Papa, let us be fair; you know I am the first to say he has old prejudices and a strain of irresoluteness in his character. Take his age, his misfortunes, and his bringing up in a day when they valued many things that are less thought of now, yet as to character there is no one better in the world, that's very sure, I will say the same as to wit. You want me to *bring you together*; my constant care, and it is no great trouble, for he is very reasonable in his judgments, is to keep aloof and make him see rose-colour all that can happen, it is a thing apart. But to prove your friendship to him no saying of mine avails, for they are only words. You cannot say that you have given him great proofs of confidence, he who was wont to receive very real ones at your hands and of a nature so intimate that, despite his trust, I only know broadly what happened between you twelve years ago and three years ago. Even last spring you were on a more cordial footing together. I cannot imagine what can have passed between you since last winter. Quite certainly there was something and, as I know you for an expert in the art of *running aground*, I am convinced of it.

If I had been present your face, you know, is my barometer. I rarely misread it, and feel sure it is some trifle you were too harassed to remove at once, and him,



Alexander I of Russia

too, with his accursed compliments. It is not the fire ? The idea occurred to me while I was puzzling my head and owing to some words you once said to me and to which I paid no great heed at the time. It depends on you, *on my word*, to make of Papa all that you will. What man of honour and of a feeling heart is not flattered by marks of confidence ? And as I have told you a hundred times, I know no greater siren than you. One may have fury in one's heart against you, but the instant you come on the scene, you, all is forgotten.* Show some trust in the Duke,† and I warrant you there is neither fire nor water he will not jump into for you. You began to be in touch over that plan at which Amschild was working.‡ I only speak of it in this connection. He is fallen, and you are as little in touch as if you had never been so in any way. It is wrong of you, for sure there is a way of turning him to much use, and with your heart here is a heart such as you need.§

He is haunted by a notion, I cannot disguise it from you, which is that you will desert his cause. Bear in mind that neither he nor we were ever for the protest, because it pledged you.|| The Duke values his aim, and very highly as fits his race, and careful of the glory of Russia, putting aside his individuality, and the happiness or misery of his people. Such is the fact ; words are nothing, and I say again, I do not spare them, but proofs

* In the draft after „forgotten,” “Do not think it is my affection that makes me say so. No, no, it is simple truth.”

† In the draft instead of “the Duke,” “this old man.”

‡ In the draft instead of “was working,” “was to be employed. I do not know if that was any good or not. And”

§ In the draft after “need,” “Pass over formality which I know displeases you more than rusticity.”

|| In the draft after “pledged you,” “to uphold a thing very awkward for all the rest of the circumstances, but that is an old story. At present as all is given back he is too rational to believe that they should be ready to sacrifice anything for such a small object regarded as a possession, an object that from another side he rates very highly as an heirloom.”

are not in my power. He is as alien from you at the moment and as aloof as the abjectest of creatures, and as for all that his aim proves to have some share in all that is done or will be done in one way or another, that vexes and grieves him. Reckon on him, but do not demand everything of him without doing anything on your part.

I am delighted to see you in good case here, and kiss your hands for your letter concerning Pavlovsk, as for telling George of the leaving of the post. From here nothing whatever interesting: *they* are off, I believe to Pavlovsk, on Tuesday. Once there it would be awkward to get your letters to me by your body servant, they might be seized. So pray send them under cover to George, who will see to them. Forgive my long letter. Yours, heart and soul.

XXIV.

June.

The last post brought me a letter from George which warrants me to write to you again to-day, dear friend, to thank you in the first place for having acceded to his request for the delaying in sending and tell you how deeply touched I am at your having told him you only counted on him and me. To protest our attachment to you would be superfluous, but to assure you I am very vexed it is so, is the truth. Constantine is hopeless in some respects. I cannot bear prophets who foresee everything, but allow me to remind you that from my knowledge of his character I advised you to give him not the *reserve* of the First Army to command, but the Reserve Army, especially the new units, as a position of trust and the only one suited to his tastes.

That one of us who ventures to allow himself a word of blame of you is always culpable, but now criminal. You must be enduring a martyrdom, for all you are now called on to do is at variance with your nature, but the more you can conquer yourself and be Emperor the more you will do your sheer duty. If I wanted to get you away from the army, as you say, that was why: I believe quite as able as your generals, but you have not only the part of captain to play, but that of ruler. If one of them does ill, punishment and reproof attend on him: if you make mistakes it all falls on your head; and lost confidence in him on whom all hangs and who, the one arbiter of the destinies of the Empire, should be the prop against which all lean, is a greater evil than left provinces. With a nature like yours, you will suffer more for one blunder you have to reproach yourself with than a thousand others, suffering which cannot fail to affect your after-decisions, for a tormented heart fetters the mind. I *do not want* you to leave it at present but gain a material success and take up your own part again, being everywhere and visiting everything. Condemn me, but I cannot lie to you, perhaps I ought to have been silent. So, farewell, kind friend, I embrace you, heart and soul.

47.

VILNA,
June 11th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

A thousand and a thousand thanks for your kind letters. I write to the Duke to-day as you desired: perhaps he will show you my letter. But that which I cannot express to you is all the delight caused me by

that you wrote to George, some parts of which he read me, and though I got a glimpse of your wish to drive me from the army, I am not affected by the more than ardent feelings which inspire you. How happy I should be if I had some more beings like you ! Your ideas do as much honour to your head as to your patriotism, and your heart. I speak no more of the feelings you display towards me personally ; you have given me so many touching proofs of them that you have taught me to count on them. Your scheme is perfect, and George will tell you that of the two alternatives I prefer the one to which you yourself incline : it seems to me that this offer, being spontaneous, will look better than if the thing was claimed for me. Although there will be some difficulty in the carrying out for lack of officers, yet the result that will produce will be really advantageous. And in this present crisis the more our numbers grow the more the hope of winning, *if we persevere*, becomes well founded. I hope ere long I shall announce to you peace with England, but not as yet. Farewell, dear friend, you are a creature such as there is none the like of. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

P.S.—I am much vexed all my efforts did not save you from Pavlovsk.*

XXV.

June.

This morning I got your letter of the 11th, good friend, and three hours later came the express with the news that hostilities had begun.

* *i.e.* the visit to the Empress Marie.

May the Supreme Being grant you success, not for your greater glory, for that, not being of this world, cannot be taken from you, but for the welfare of humanity. The feelings of our hearts chime, there can be no others. I love you when you do your duty, if you do not I shall love you still, but blush to do so. Reasonable chances are for you: persevere and be always yourself, it is much more than you think. I am dismayed at the way in which you speak of my plan. Heaven, that sees my heart, sees also that no personal aim ever enters it. I send by this express to George the copy of my letter to Rostopchin, in which I tried to make him see that I ventured to talk in that strain, for but for that he would have the right to tell me that he dare not act of himself, and at the same time not make you appear in anything. I hope he will understand me: if that takes, Grusinsky and our men would seem to me the first that ought to get an urging word.

Give your orders to George, who will transmit them to me, if you so wish it. At the same time August must do something on his side in Esthonia, and perhaps Amschild, at George's prompting. That, however, is your concern: as for my own particular share, I noiselessly make my plans, and only ask of you leave to be allowed to tell Gûriev to give me, according to an allotment, he would make by the size of the estates, the people, having no right to meddle with them or claim them in any way. According to what George has written to me you put him sheerly in the place he wanted, and in which I believe, as the matter is ordered, that he will serve you well. Moreover, I can tell you he augurs well, and that means something with a man who normally sees the black side of everything. As for Pavlovsk, I fully recognise your goodness, of which you have given me another proof, in urging Mother to betake herself to town: she

asked me to do her the *boon* to stay till the beginning of July at the Tauris Palace. You must know that at such a price I could not refuse, the more so that she promised me my entire liberty ; by the 15th, I shall be in my own house. At the Tauris your rooms I fancy are all that please me. Forgive my long letter, kind friend, yours, heart and soul.

48.

Moscow,
July 12th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I seize the first moment to express to you how touched I am by all your friendship and what you do for me. My coming here has not been in vain. The Government of Smolensk offered me 20,000 men, that of Moscow offers 80,000. The spirit of the people is excellent. My first act at Moscow was a *Te Deum* for peace with the Turks : the crowd on the square was not to be counted.

As soon as my business here is done I leave for Petersburg, and the thought of seeing you again and at Tver gives me a pleasure that no words can express. Here is a paper for George, of whom I am fonder than ever. We must make an example of the creature in question. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

P.S.—I cannot tell you what the sight of Moscow made me experience in the way of delightful memories of our sojourn and those happy days. It made me cry like a child.

49.

Moscow,
July 15th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I have just received your very dear letter from Moscow with the two enclosures. I have only a minute to embrace you a thousand times, and tell you that I count on being at Tver the 18th or 19th, wanting to reach Petersburg on the 22nd for some days. Yours, heart and soul, for life.

50.

Moscow,
July 18th.
(Two hours after noon).

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

It is not in my power to express all that your dear letter from Tver, which I have received this moment, caused me to feel. To-morrow will be the happy day when I hope to see you again at last. But I see I have led you into an error, for your letter shows you expect me to-day. I hasten then to send the dispatch-rider back to you, so that you may not look for me this evening. I shall leave at midnight, so I hope to be there to-morrow to dinner, and shall spend the rest of the day with you. All your affection for me forms an essential part of the happiness there is left for me to last on this earth. Would that I could give it you back as my heart feels it. Yours, heart and soul, for life. I embrace George.

XXVI.

YAROSLAVL,

August 5th.

This morning the bearer arrived with the enclosure, dear friend : he will tell you things of a nature to cause you scanty satisfaction, but forgive me for so saying, the fault is all yours, I cannot keep from you what I think. Kûtûsov was the bearer to you of very energetic representations, criminal perhaps at any other time, but necessity drives those to speak whose docile conduct is a guarantee to you of their good intentions. If you honour the Colonel with an interview, he will tell you at length what has happened since. You have left those commanding in a perfect indecision, and it is really a miracle, and thanks are due to him whom you very wrongly style my hero for his conduct. Vellachev cannot tell you many of the details, for he is not known to you, but that is why I accuse you of failure of nerve and am going to furnish you an example. Barclay obeyed you in sending Constantine back from the front to Moscow. At present the blame is thrown on him alone ; and your brother, in spite of his faulty conduct, appears in the finest light, for they say it is for having spoken out and told the truth aloud that the General wanted to be rid of him. If your subordinates are thus compromised, you and your service do not gain by it. George is writing to you more fully. You owe to yourself and the country some decision or other, for Yermolov,* whom I have never seen in my life, but whom you seem to rate high, says he will not answer for it. But that in ten days the enemy will be at Moscow, if things remain on this footing. George points out to you a way, there are others besides, but in God's name do not choose that of

* The famous Alexis Yermolov.

wanting to command in person, for there needs without delay a leader in whom the troops have confidence, and on that score you inspire none. Besides, if it was you that met with a check it would be an irreparable disaster from the sentimental point. The enclosed, as you will see, was by no means intended to be communicated to you, but it shall not be said I keep from compromising my own brother to keep you aware of the least of the things that can interest you. I crave your pardon if my letter displeases you, *and only plead my intentions and my devotion, which cannot be doubtful to you.*

51.

PETERSBURG,
August 8th.

I seize, dear sweet friend, the first spare moment I have to answer your dear letters, and thank you a thousand times for them. You can well picture the heap of jobs I was overloaded with at Petersburg after so long an absence, and above all in circumstances such as the present. I indite this to you both, being quite unable to write to you separately. So I will tell you that George was unfair to me when he accused me of authorising Rostopchin to interfere in the shaping of the arming of Tver and Yaroslavl. I never gave him the least right to do so, as the rescript of which I left George the copy at Tver shows: I only instructed him to direct the march of the troops there on the points I had marked out. As a still more undeniable proof I append the rescript I addressed to Rostopchin as soon as I learned it from your letters.

Here I found a worse frame of mind than at Moscow,

and in the interior. A great indignation against the Minister of War who, I must admit, gives room for it by the undecidedness of his conduct and the disorder that reigns in his work. The see-saw between him and Bagration has only grown and flourished, so that I have been forced, after having put the whole before a small committee I formed to that end, to appoint a Commander-in-Chief of all the armies. Considering all things, the choice fell on Kûtûsov as being senior to all the rest, and thus allowing of Bennigsen serving under him, for they are close friends to boot. On the whole Kûtûsov is in great favour with the public here and at Moscow. I have been kept here longer than I looked for owing to the Swedish Diet not having come to an end so soon. I leave to-night. I own to you that I made no great scruple this time of having held back my answer because that gave George time to stay with you a little. By then I hope you will have been confined, and I greatly hope he was there at the moment.

Farewell, dear sweet friend, your fondness is one of my greatest consolations. May you always be as happy as I wish you. I embrace George a thousand times, thanking him greatly for all his pains over the arming. Yours and his, heart and soul, for life.

52.

August 24th.

DEAR KIND FRIEND,

You do not suspect how I delighted in your safe delivery.* It is a weight the less on my mind, but there are some pretty heavy ones there still. Veliachev reached Abo the same day as the Prince Royal, so that

* Birth of the Grand Duchess's second son, Peter.

the three days we spent there together I had not a moment to breathe, let alone to write. Here I am back again since the day before yesterday. I do not send Veliachev back to you, for he has hurt his leg, having been thrown, but I profit by an express Mother is sending you to say these few words to you. I am writing you a long letter with all the details which I will forward in a couple of days. If George has not left, tell him with my friendly greetings to wait for my detailed letter before he does.

Farewell, dear sweet friend, I could not cherish you more dearly than I do. Wholly yours, heart and soul. I need not tell you I am very honoured to be godfather to your child.

XXVII.

YAROSLAVL,
September 3rd.

Moscow is taken. Some things are unaccountable. Don't forget your resolve, "No peace," and you have still the hope of regaining your honour. If you are in sorrow don't forget your friends ready to fly to you and too happy if they can be any help: command them.

My dear friend, no peace, and if you get to Kazan, still no peace !

XXVIII.

YAROSLAVL,
September 6th.

It is impossible for me to hold out any longer, for all the pain I must give you, dear friend. The

taking of Moscow has given the last touch to the exasperation of people : displeasure is at its height, and you personally are from far being spared. If that reaches me, judge of the rest. You are loudly accused of the illhap of your Empire, of the general and private ruin, in fact, of having forfeited the honour of the country and your own. It is not one class, but all, that combine to cry you down. Without going into what is said of the way we make war, one of the principal counts against is your breach of your word given to Moscow, which waited for you most impatiently, and the deserted plight in which it is left : you look as if you had betrayed it. Do not fear a catastrophe of the revolutionary kind, oh, no ! but I leave you to judge of the condition of things in a country whose Head is despised : there is nothing they are not ready to do to redeem our honour, but while eager to sacrifice all to their country, men say to themselves, " To what would that lead when all is massacred and ruined by the folly of the leaders ? " The thought of peace happily is not general, far from it, for the feeling of shame following on the loss of Moscow gives rise to a craving for vengeance. They complain of you and loudly ; I think it my duty to tell you so, dear friend, for it is too important. What you have to do, it does not come within my province to point out, but safeguard your honour which is assailed. Your presence may rally people's minds to you, neglect no means, and do not fancy I exaggerate. No, unfortunately, I say truth, and the heart bleeds of her who owes you so much and would fain, at the cost of a thousand lives, rescue you from the plight you are in.

53.

PETERSBURG,
September 7th.

It was yesterday morning, dear friend, that I received your sad letter of the 3rd. In good sooth there are things one cannot conceive. But rest assured that my determination *to fight on is firmer than ever*. I would rather cease to be what I am than make terms with the monster who is the curse of the world. Assure yourself that I count surely on your devotion and George's, and put my trust in God, in the splendid character of our nation, and the obstinacy I am resolved to display in not giving way beneath the yoke.

Wholly yours, heart and soul. I embrace George a thousand times. Since August 29th, I have not had a line from Kûtûsov : it is scarcely credible.

 XXIX.

YAROSLAVL,
September 13th.

This letter is to speak to you on a subject which is painful on principle and from delicacy ; anyhow, the owning of my misdeeds and the concentration of circumstances may procure me your pardon and assent to my request. Bagration* died yesterday evening ; the bearer saw him, and one of the Staff said he was at the last gasp, so that is true. You will recall my

* Prince Peter Bagration (1765-1812), mortally wounded at Borodino, died September 12th, at the seat of the Princess Golitsyn, at Sima, in Vladimir, and was buried there.

dealings with him, and I told you he holds documents which might cruelly compromise me if they fell into strange hands. He vowed to me a hundred times he had destroyed them, but what I know of his character has always made me doubt it. It is of great moment (and I may say to you) that such papers should remain unknown. I ask of you the favour to have the seal put on these, and have them handed over to you and let me look through them to take away what concerns me. They must be either at Prince Salagov's, with whom to my knowledge they were lodged, though he did not know what was entrusted to him, during the past campaigns, or with himself. If you find the thing cannot be done that way or there is another method to take, be pleased to do it and promptly, the matter not brooking delay : for any's sake let no one be in it, for that would compromise me frantically. Forgive, dear friend, my troubling you with such a childish request at a moment such as this. It might be got from Salagov, should he prove to have none, whereabouts they are

Yesterday, Prince Volkonsky handed me your letter : I thank you for it heart and soul, and implore you to determine George's fate, as he is withering on the stalk from this uncertainty, for he is nothing and does nothing at present. Are you going to the front ? Love from both of us.

XXX.

YAROSLAVL,
September 15th.

This time I bear no ill news to you, dear, it is only a small explanation of my letter of the day before yesterday, fearing I did not express myself well in my

haste. You know that a decree from the Senate suspends George from his duties, so that he cannot resume them until it is cancelled. His desire inclines him to do all that you reckon will be most use to you, but he cannot remain doing nothing. Would you like him to go to the front, or to stay and take up his concerns again? Would you like to employ him some other way? Decide something, only do decide: for my part I am set to follow him wherever he may go. What will you do? My love to you, heart and soul, dear.

54.

September 18th.

I owe you an answer at length, dear, and here it is. That folks should be unjust to one who is down, should overwhelm him, tear him to pieces, nothing is commoner. I never deceive myself on that score; I knew that would happen to me as soon as Fate went against me. Perhaps I am fated even to lose the friends on whom I most counted. All that, unhappily, is only the usual way of things in this wretched world.

Reluctant as I may feel to weary anyone whatever with details which concern me—a reluctance which is greatly increased when I am in trouble—the sincere attachment I bear you makes me overcome it, and I am going to set things before you as I see them.

What can a man do more than follow his best prompting? It is that alone that was my guide. It was that which made me give Barclay command of the First Army on the reputation he had acquired in past wars against the French and Swedes. The same led me to think he was more skilful than Bagration. When this

conviction found itself increased by the glaring mistakes the latter made during this campaign, and which partly brought about our reverses, I thought him less than ever suited to command the two armies massed before Smolensk. Although but little pleased with what I had had the chance of seeing of Barclay, I thought him less unskilful than the other in the matter of strategy, of which the other has no idea. To crown all I had no one better to put there, according to that same conviction, at the time.

It is wholly untrue that my aide, Kûtûsov, brought me, as you have been told, strong representations from the other generals in the field. He simply came to report to me on events which took place round Vitebsk. On my putting the question to him myself, he told me that they believed at the front that neither Barclay nor Bagration was fit to command such a great force, and that Peter Pahlen was the man the army wanted. Apart from the *treacherous* and *immortal* character of the man and *his crimes* only call to mind he has not faced an enemy for from 18 to 20 years, and the last time he was in action he was only general of brigade. How, then, could I count on the man, and where are the proofs of his military capacity?

At Petersburg I found everybody bent on old Kûtûsov being given the chief command, that was the general cry. My knowledge of the man made me against it at first, but when, in his letter of August 5th, Rostopchin informed me that all Moscow wants Kûtûsov to command, considering Barclay and Bagration both incapable of the post, and meanwhile, as if on purpose, Barclay only committed blunder on blunder round Smolensk, I could not do otherwise than yield to the general wish, and appointed Kûtûsov. I still believe at this moment that in the conditions then obtaining, I could not do other-

wise than out of three generals, alike unfit to take chief command, fix my choice on him for whom the general voice was given.

I come now to a head which concerns me more nearly, to wit, my personal honour. I own to you, dear friend, that it is still more painful to me to touch this string, and that, at least in your eyes, I believed it intact. I cannot even believe that in your letter what is meant is that personal courage that every private can compass, and to which I attach no merit. However, if I am to have the humiliation of dwelling on this head, I would tell you that the Grenadiers of the Little Russia and Kiev Regiments can vouch that I am as steady under fire as any man. But once more I cannot believe that you mean that sort of courage in your letter, and I suppose you did mean moral courage. It is the only kind to which in the higher callings any merit can be allowed. Perhaps if I had remained at the front I should have succeeded in convincing you I have my share of that, too. But what I cannot understand is that you who, in your letters to George at Vilna, wanted to get me away from the front, you who, in yours of August 5th by Veliachev, tell me "In God's name, do not take the course of wanting to command in person, for there needs, without loss of time, a chief in whom the men have confidence, and in that respect you inspire none. Besides, if you experienced a check, it would be a blow not to be repaired from the sentimental point of view," after having thus proclaimed the fact that I *can inspire no confidence*, I cannot understand, I say, what the meaning is in your last letter of "safeguard your honour, which is assailed. Your presence may bring men's minds back to you." Is it my presence at the front you mean by that? And how reconcile the two opinions so widely opposed?

After having sacrificed on the altar of usefulness my personal self-esteem by leaving the front, because they said I did harm there, that I was nothing but a cause of anxiety to the generals, I inspired the troops with no confidence, that, moreover, reverses laid to my charge were more disastrous than if they were to my subordinates, judge yourself, kind friend, how painful it must be to hear that my honour is impugned, when I only did as they wished in leaving the front when my own only wish was to stay there, and I was firmly resolved to go back there before Kûtûsov was appointed, and I only refrained from doing so after that on remembering what the sycophantic character of the man had brought about at Austerlitz, and partly in accordance with your own advice and that of several others of the same opinion as you.

If you ask me why I did not go to Moscow, my answer is that I never agreed to do so, nor gave any promise to go there. Rostopchin greatly urged me in his letter to do so, but that was before the retreat from Smolensk, consequently, when by my visit to Finland I could not possibly do so. On the other hand, afterwards, in his letter of August 14th, he says to me, "Now, sire, I come to the main point, that is, your coming hither. There is no doubt that your presence no longer evokes enthusiasm, and before your arrival events are not in your favour, your presence would only add to the general unrest, and as it becomes us to run no risks by exposing you to them, it would be better for you to decide to delay your leaving Petersburg till the receiving of some news which would give the actual state of things a turn for the better."

Now let us look a little into whether I could go to Moscow. As soon as it had once been laid down that my being at the front in person did more harm than good, the army drawing nearer to Moscow as it fell

back from Smolensk, could I decently be at Moscow ? Although I could never have thought that city could be evacuated in such a disgraceful manner, yet I was bound to tell myself that the loss of a battle or two might bring it about. Then what part should I have played there, should I not have been there merely to clear out bag and baggage with the others ?

But let us see further, by reckoning of time, if I could get there in time or not. No sooner was Bentinck back I set out for Finland in such a way as to get there at the appointed season. I only stayed at Abo with the Prince Royal three days ; you will own that is not long. The 21st or 22nd I was back at Petersburg. Supposing I had left the next day, it was only the day of the battle, the 26th, that I should have reached Moscow ; accordingly, I could not even have prevented the disastrous retreat which was effected that night, and which ruined everything. Then think how I should have been placed at Moscow. Would not all the burden of after events have fallen, the moment I was so there at hand, on me and me alone, and that rightly, and yet could I have prevented what happened when once they had failed to turn the victory to account and the favourable moment was lost ? So I should only have come to take upon me the disgrace that others had brought about.

On the contrary, my purpose was to seize the first coming of a real advantage gained by us over the enemy and which would force him to fall back, to go to Moscow in good sooth. Even after the news of the battle of the 26th, I should have started at once if, in the same report, Kûtúsov had not warned me he had determined to fall back 4 miles to recover. These fatal 4 miles, while they poisoned all the delight I had in the victory, caused me to wait for the next report, and that only made me catch a clear glimpse of ill-haps.

Such is the exact relation of the facts, dear friend. I am going to add some other considerations which will perhaps strike you. This spring, before leaving Vilna, I was warned from a sure source that the constant efforts of Napoleon's secret agents were to be directed to discrediting the Government in every possible way, to set it in direct opposition with the nation ; that to that end it was agreed, if I was at the front, to lay all the failures that might come at my door, and to depict me as having sacrificed to my personal vanity the safety of the Empire by preventing generals more experienced than myself gaining successes over the enemy. On the other hand, if I were not there, to set that down to lack of courage on my part. But even that was not enough : the devilish plan was also to aim on these same lines at sowing dissension in the family.

Will you not be astonished when I tell you that 8 or 10 days after my leaving I was warned that it was on you they would try their hands first, and that they would do their best to display me to your eyes in the most unfavourable light ? Your friendship towards me having constantly opened my heart to you, and my whole thoughts I kept perfectly calm, and troubled very little about it. They were in the same way to play upon me by alarming me on your account, but they soon realised it would be waste of time. To compass all these infernal plots, beings wholly innocent of all the machinations, alarmed at all they would find means to bring to their ears, were to become, without being aware of it, and by their very zeal, the echoes of these stories originally set afloat by Napoleon's tools, so that in that way they might reach us in the end, and the real concocters remain nicely hidden. The period, especially at which all these devices were to be set going, was when one of the two capitals should fall into the hands of the enemy.

Here, at Petersburg, I am every day more in the position to convince myself how accurate the warnings given me were, and what you tell me in your last letter contributes not a little to prove it to me. Meanwhile, I am the first to agree that, in the woeful plight in which we are, such a conspiracy meets with all possible chances to succeed, and the spreaders of rumours of this kind must naturally find proselytes in great numbers.

As for me, dear friend, all I can answer for is my heart, my intentions, and my zeal for all that can conduce to the good and profit of my country, according to my best belief. As to talent, perhaps I may be lacking in it, but it cannot be acquired : it is a boon of nature, and nobody ever obtained it. With such poor backing as I have, devoid of tools in all directions, guiding such a vast machine in a terrible crisis and against an infernal opponent, who to the most awful rascality unites the most transcendent talent, and is seconded alike by the whole power of all Europe, and by a band of men of talent formed during 20 years of war and revolution, folks will be forced to own in common justice that it is not astonishing if I meet with reverses. You will bear in mind how we often foresaw them when I chatted with you two : even the loss of the two capitals was divined possible, and *constancy alone* was thought to be the proper remedy for the ills of this cruel season. Far from losing heart, despite all the failures I find myself steeped in, I am more firm than ever to persist in the struggle, and all my efforts are exerted to that end.

I frankly own to you that to be misjudged by the public, say a throng of beings who know me little or not at all, is a less sore pang to me than to be so by the little band of those to whom I have given all my affection, and by whom I hoped to be known thoroughly. But even if this sorrow was to be added to all those I endure, I

protest to you before God, that I should not find fault with them, and only see in it the fate common to the unfortunate—that of being deserted.

Forgive me, dear, for having so long tried your patience, both by the length of this epistle and the time I have been in writing to you, being able to snatch but little from my daily avocations. Now I must report you on minor points. I have not succeeded in getting Mother to give the riband of St. Catherine to the Volkonsky : she has written to you about it herself, and I found her very obdurate against the idea. As for Gagarin,* it is quite impossible for me to promote him, for he would pass over the bodies of the Saltikovs and a number of other senators, all his seniors. On the whole, at this juncture, where such momentous events are taking place, I consider that rewards should be suspended for a while, except to those who are shedding their blood for their country.

As to the two doctors, they have been promoted.† I must blame myself, dear, for not asking you to what regiment you would like your little one posted, just as the elder was.

Being accustomed to write you joint letters, I will tell you, dear George, that just now you are much more useful to me at the head of your three Governments and that part of the communication than at head-quarters.

Yours, both of you, heart and soul, always. I send herewith the usual toys for the child.

* Prince Ivan Gagarin (1771-1832), then Chamberlain, and later Master of the Household to the Grand Duchess Catherine, afterwards Senator at Moscow ; husband of the well-known actress Syomonov.

† The Grand Duchess had two doctors, Theodor Bach and Ivan Harri, the surgeon.

XXXI.

YAROSLAVL,

September 23rd.

To make believe to love and know how to dissemble with those you call friends, to warp words prompted by truth into seditious ones ; to fancy, in spite of continuous and undoubted proofs of a boundless devotion that you will be *misjudged*, nay, *deserted*, I own I do not know how to love so, and I would you did not either. I am sorry to have to take up your time, but I am fain to justify myself in your eyes. That, with you at Moscow the city would still be yours, for it would have been defended, and the enemy would only have had it at the price of his blood. I cannot on this score take sides with the Count, methinks that for you there would have been more glory even, for, according to all the accounts from the army, it could, would, and should have fought. Moscow would not have been deserted by its inhabitants, and the Count's most happy plan could have been carried out, to be sure without great hope of success ; at least, the glory of a stalwart defence was ensured : that is my view, but each can have his own. As to the warnings given you this spring, they chime perfectly with everyone's belief, puts all possible methods in play to cause confusion in the interior, we cannot use enough to prevent him and maintain order. Never was your post as governor-general in those three districts of more consequence than now. Our only remaining communications with the rest of the Empire now lie through Yaroslavl : a portion of Moscow is there, and there are many other considerations. If you keep order and quiet for me in the three districts assuredly you will have rendered me and the State the greatest of services. To conclude, I expect you both

to be firm and unyielding. You have so often enjoined them on me that it is time to display them, and rest assured it requires more to contend with internal dissensions.

As for that, could I have loved you? Anyhow nothing in my letters can have given you the right to doubt it. My idea of personal courage is in accord with yours, I should hold you very cheap if I could doubt it. What I wrote to George at Vilna on your coming away from the front was right: I wanted to see you play your part, and your presence quicken all the springs in the interior. Besides, did you command or not? At Tver we argued on that head, on which there are proofs either way. What I wrote you on August 5th is quite as true as what I wrote on September 6th, "Do not take the course of wanting to command in person," would and will be to me for aye save that then, *on August 5th*, they were calling for a change in the leadership, and that on *September 6th*, after the abandonment of Moscow and the shameful conduct of the generals, what was needed was to revive the public spirit and prove emphatically how you condemned such an inconceivable step. "Safeguard your honour!" means "Show yourself in your Empire!" for your capital is no longer there, and even at the front, to give men fresh heart! I consider there is no contradiction in my views. You were awaited with impatience and eagerly longed for at Moscow: Count Rostopchin printed the announcement of your early arrival. I am convinced, and it is the general view, I own to you that the feeling I experience since the evening your letter came to me was a strange one to me. You know friendship only by name if you fear to lose your friends by misfortune: those that are truly so will rejoice on that score, as only then can they demonstrate their attachment to you in all its extent. I say nothing

about the count of the generals, as that is a matter of personal thinking, and besides, you may have sound reasons for preferring one to the other : for we said to you on that score was our view. As for Ruhlen,⁸ I have heard him spoken of, but with terror, for what trust can men have in a traitor ? *Your personal good name* was always untouched in my eyes : but for assuredly Napoleon has done and will do everything to harm you, and the steps taken can, he trusts, have a different complexion put on them. As for sowing discord in the family, never with such members can his plan, if we grant it, be carried out : your brother, the only one to the fore, is too genuinely devoted to you to ever be a danger, and as for myself, I consider it beneath me to reply on this head. I asked of you as a favour not to forget George and me at a time when you must be in trouble ; never will another thought enter my heart than that of proving to you the breadth of our devotion. I have seen with pain that you could do without us in sorrow, and it was in order to cause you no more that I have not yet revealed it to you in full. Whoever should try *to depict you in unfavourable colours to my eyes* would not talk long : I have no need of proofs on this score, it is a truth that no one has even tried to plumb. I own to you that far from seeking in a harangue such a distant author, I think him nearer to you, but what matters. If you would look into my conduct and dealings, they would prove nothing to my hurt in that respect. For that matter you will not be angry with me *for claiming it shall be so*, how and in what manner you please. What George says to you about your coming to Petersburg is solely to that end, it matters too much to me. What I have written you *is true*. Send whom you will, so it is an upright man : if he does not certify so, you can do with me what you will. They accuse you of stupidity,

and that, again, is why I say "Safeguard your honour!" I am not one of the *proselytes of the spreaders of such talk*, but I thought it my duty to tell you the truth: you did not understand me, as I see, but have turned things right the other way by taking what I reported as my own opinion, and for that you accuse me of misjudging you. It is so little the case that when I saw you at Tver recently, George and I said to each other, "What is the matter with him? He has certainly taken something to heart," and it was only delicacy and the few moments we had to spend together which kept us from telling you, and as for writing, how write suspicions based on your looks? However it may be, this ought to come to an end, and you owe it to yourself and me to put me out of reach of such surmises; they are irritating and, allow me to say it, slanderous. But before concluding this letter, I cannot refrain from adjuring you *not* to pay heed to those who, by dint of your natural distrust, tell you such stories: they drag in Napoleon's name where their own would be enough. I again crave your pardon for the lengthiness of this, and am yours, heart and soul.

 55.

PETERSBURG,
September 24th.

I received first, dear friend, yours of the 15th, and on the 21st yours of the 13th. I will tell you in all frankness that they did me genuine good, for I found in them testimony of that friendship of yore towards me to which I so cling. If you find me too touchy, begin by putting yourself in the cruel position where I am, and then you will realise the worth of a tender word

from a being to whom one is attached, as I am to you. But a truce to what concerns me ! I come now to you. What you tell me in yours of the 13th, touches me too nearly for me not to take it up instantly. At once I sent in search of Salagov.* He was ill in bed, and could not come to me till the next day, the 22nd. He told me there was a time when he had the keeping of the deceased's papers, but later, by his bidding, he handed them over to a certain Chekûanov, a Georgian serving in the Court Hunt. He offered to go hot foot to the person, making out he knew of a casket in which the deceased's most interesting papers were like to be. Yesterday, the 23rd, he came in the morning to report that he found a quantity of the deceased's papers at that person's, and had been busy sealing them up the rest of the day, but they were only current official papers, and the small casket had been carried off by the deceased when he last went away from here. He added the surest way to get it back was at once to send this man Chekûanov with an orderly to Sima,† where he died, to seize on it, he was the only man that knew it. He even feared the family of Boris Galitzin might lay hands on it. Meanwhile, I have some assurance in the matter, for St. Priest‡ went there the day after his death, and writes me he has sealed up his papers. So, without losing a moment, I made all arrangements to send this man with a good orderly and a letter from Salagov, and another from me to St. Priest, and I hope by this means to get back for you what you want. If by chance he and the orderly do not pass through Yaroslavl, do not be uneasy, for they say that route is frightful, and there is another much better by Vikhny Volochok, and Rostov. They have orders to take which-

* Prince Simon Salagov (1756-1820), Auditor-General and Senator.

† In Vladimir Government, the seat of Prince B. Galitzin.

‡ Count Emmanuel de St. Priest (1776-1814), A.D.C. General.

ever is best. Directly I receive the papers I will send them you at once, and you will understand that if I do not have them handed you by those sent in search of them when they are back, it is in order not to compromise you by letting it be seen there is anything in common between you and the deceased.

So my commission is fulfilled as best I can, and with all the zeal I have for all that concerns you. As for George, my dear, I told you in my long letter that I find him a thousand times more useful in charge of his districts than at head-quarters, where he could mend nothing.

In my first letter I confine myself to talking to you of myself and my opinions. Farewell, dear, assure yourself that to be fonder of you than I am is impossible. Heart and soul, wholly yours for ever. I embrace George a thousand times.

XXXII.

YAROSLAVL,

September 25th.

I have many excuses to make you for not having thanked you by last express for the ribands you sent the little man : believe me, I valued it none the less, and it was only my being so taken up that made me fail to : if you have nothing against it, let it be the Preobrajensky Regiment. Here is the "state" of the officers of the battalion ; * I hope you will be so as to have them put in order if you go on with it. Yours, heart and soul.

Be good enough to send back the records of service ; as for the officers still wanting, in a little I will send you their names, but be so good as to keep these there.

* Raised by the Grand Duchess.

XXXIII.

YAROSLAVL,

September 28th.

It is less than an hour since I got your letter of the 24th, and I swear to you it was the first happy moment I have enjoyed for a long time : you had crushed me with your dreadful doubts as to my devotion. No, dear, never, never will you find it fail and, quickly as I answered your last, I am as eager to embrace you for this one, which is *you*. I find no words to tell you how touched I am by the delicate way in which you comply with my request relative to B.'s papers. You have gone beyond my wishes, and I am very grateful to you for it. Only I regret that my last blunders added to the number of your tasks. Nothing from the front. I send you herewith a letter from Rostopchin, the only one I have had from him since that I passed on to you. I stop here, dear friend, embracing you with all my heart. *Never doubt my devotion*, for it is a sin in the eyes of God.

XXXIV.

YAROSLAVL,

September 29th.

Prince Volkonsky having come, I write you a few words in haste, dear, to say . . . I . . . here is the letter from Rostopchin that Volkonsky delivered to me. A Prince of that name from Moscow has come here, and George is questioning him : if it is worth while I will send an orderly with his depositions. We both embrace you heartily. I make haste not to delay the bearer. Good-bye.

XXXV.

YAROSLAVL,
October 14th.

I only send you this, dear friend, to tell you that I perfectly agree with all George writes you. He does what he should. I shared his alarms, his troubles, and his impatience during the three months of which the first at least was spent in moulding the levies, but now there is nothing more that can keep him here, his Govts. being under military jurisdiction. You promised him at the beginning of the campaign to let him make it; a post where he could be useful to you alone made him leave it, now he may think of himself. Do not call us restless souls, but it is a natural feeling not to wish to blush for the coat you wear. If you have not the time to write, answer verbally "yes" or "no," by the bearer, and believe me, dear, yours ever, heart and soul.

56.

November 2nd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

It is Visare who bears you these lines. As soon as I got rid of my *erisipelas pustulorum* I first got bogged in the marshes and dykes of your partner, and, after making all that straight, am now sending Visare off again. Your delightful letters, my dear, give me frantic pleasure each time, because there is none but you in the world to take up a thing in such a delightful and sometimes madcap way. On reading your letter, by my cousin, upon my honour I thought you had a brain-storm. But sometimes there is a certain gentleman who turns up

fair in the middle of a phrase who wins my adoration each time. My deuced complaint made it quite impossible to pay you a visit before the sleighing, as I intended, but still as soon as it is going I fly to you, for I have a real need to see you. I begin to miss the *after-parades* frantically, and I am quite another man from what I was last winter !

You have heard talk of the fine scheme of education. Gatchina* is become the Leipzig or Göttingen of Russia, even though there is no primary school there. But it seems folks bite their fingers at the terrible sacrifice they have undergone. A truce for to-day. Yours, heart and soul, for life. You know whether I love you.

57.

November 2nd.

MY DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

At last I can give you an exact account of my looking into the business you trusted me with. But that account is not such as I hoped. The orderly with the Georgian, Chekûanov, came back and brought me a huge pile of papers. At first I set to to weed it ; they were in total disorder, and if all the secret military correspondence we need in the present juncture were not among them I would have sent you the whole so that you could yourself take from it what you want. But I feel convinced, after a search which necessarily took me several days, thanks to my daily tasks, that we were searching in vain and, excepting four letters I send herewith in Vilamov's hand, all the rest are only business papers and some letters from his wife. At the same time I sent the orderly with the Georgian, Salagov brought

* Determined on by the Empress Marie for the young Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael.

me six enormous piles, declaring they were only official papers of no value, which had been deposited by the deceased with the Georgian. Taking his word for it, I did not touch them, but finding my search among the papers brought by the orderly useless, I set myself to run through these six bundles, and, after having spent several days running over them, saw that Salagov was right, and there was simply nothing there. At this juncture came his Aide-D.C., Bredynsky, who had charge of his office. So I thought, to have nothing to reproach myself with, I would try a last effort, and, having sent for Salagov, told him that many papers I knew the deceased had were not among those brought me, and bade him question the A.D.C. on the point. The latter invoked all the witnesses present at the moment when the seals were put on the papers to testify nothing had been taken away. Hereupon Salagov told me that on leaving for the front in Moldavia he himself saw him burn a quantity of papers, and therefore all that was not forthcoming must have been burned. Such, dear friend, is the exact state of matters. I regret to have been unable to help you in this delicate business, but if it really is so that the papers are burnt, that comes to the same.

And now, dear friend, let me say a word to you on your letters. The one in answer to that long one of mine caused me such pain as I cannot tell, and which you would have understood if you knew what you are to me and how I love you. I saw you did not understand me, and took the other way about all that I said to you. In revenge, the one in answer to the report I sent you as to the sending of the Georgian, caused me frantic delight, because I found you again in it such as you have always been to me, and if I could have written to you at once you would have taken me for some one out of the yellow house (madhouse).

Forgive me for not having sent Vardemburg back to you sooner, but he came just at the time when I was searching those papers, hence I wanted him to carry you the result.

Let us talk a little of our fortunes. God has done everything; it is He that has changed the face of things so suddenly in our favour, by sending down on Napoleon's head all the ills that he destined for us. I do not speak to you of military events: the bulletins must keep you fully abreast of matters.

Dear George, I have not been able to comply with your desires as to that corps of Wintzingerode's, which at bottom is only a flying column of 1,500 horses, half of them Cossacks. This body, from the instant of the retaking of Moscow and the enemy's flight, lost all its importance, to wit, that of covering the road to Petersburg, and became a mere set of partisans which it would not have been decent to see you command. The militia could no longer form part of it, because it had to move quickly on the enemy's right and play the true Cossack game. As for your wish to go to the front, I will tell you this time what I told you the first time in all frankness: the service of the country would certainly be advanced but the Governor-General of three provinces in the present juncture should be on the spot, where without doubt you can do more for the common weal than at the front. You see yourself all the follies that have taken place at Novgorod. Moreover, while Napoleon was in the interior of the country I thought the thing quite unfeasible; that is the reason why I myself thought I ought to stay at the centre of the administration of the Empire. Now that the enemy is getting near our frontier, and perhaps, God helping, bids fair to pass it altogether, these considerations lose their importance. In a few days I go to join Count Wittgenstein's force,

which, according to the plan now being carried out, is to make a junction with Shchishchegov's army, already at Minsk, and facing about, will then be in first line, while the main army will form the second line. For that matter all my horses and carriages, which Kûtûsov was cool enough to send along the road to Petersburg, when he himself was making ready to evacuate Moscow, without a sound to me, are with Wittgenstein's column, where I had them sent from Novgorod when, upon the taking of Moscow, I formed the scheme of war now being carried out. As soon as I reach Lepel, if you are still of the same mind, I will send for you. So answer me by express, still addressing here, for a week will probably go by before I start.

It only remains for me to talk to you of the Governor of Tver. I am sorry that you took the thing in that way; I could not think you set much store by the man, seeing you do not know him: you have hardly spent a week at Tver since he has been there. As to the opinion I expressed to you concerning him, here are the authorities on whom it is based. Firstly Wintzingerode, and then Kûtûsov were wholly displeased with him; these are both men of merit and not likely to waft their opinions in the air. The son of your Princess, an eye-witness, gave me details about him, which are shameful, as regards the little heed or goodwill the man showed in such momentous circumstances. The same thing has been borne witness to to me by Senator Miklachevsky,* deputed to transport the supplies of the Committee of Rations. Hence I thought it for the public good to remove this man as proved incapable. If you have there the brother of General Kologrivoff,† whom I know, I

* Michael Miklachevsky, Privy Councillor, Senator in the Survey Department from 1810 to 1818.

† The Governor of Tver was in 1812 Luke Kologrivoff, brother of General Andrew of that name of the Cavalry.

can certify you he is a heavy lout, but as there are three or four of them, I do not know which of them it is. By now that no longer matters so much.

I wind up by embracing you both from the bottom of my heart, reiterating that my devotion to both will end only with my life. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

P.S.—I was meaning to send off Wardenburg this morning when I got the news that Chernichev,* detached with a Cossack regiment from Chichagov's Army towards Wittgenstein, since Brest, has done a splendid stroke in rescuing Wintzingerode, and bringing him safe and sound to the former. They reached here in the course of the day.

XXXVI.

YAROSLAVL,

November 4th.

I hasten, dear, to show you all my gratitude for your goodness in confirming and putting in Orders the officers of the battalion: it is a great boon you have granted me, and you have made those gentlemen very happy. Here is a report. I am forming a reserve company also: the battalion is here and marches next week to join the army. Do not accuse me of lack of discretion, but I must ask you another favour: Prince Alexander Obolensky, Captain in the Dragoons of the Guard, is in virtue of it Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army. He has shaped the battalion, and given himself much trouble, and besides, is one of the senior captains in the regiment. Could you not make him Colonel of the

* Alexander Chernichev, afterwards Prince and Minister of War.

battalion, still leaving him A.D.C. to George? That would be no harm to anyone, at least in the regiment. I assure you he has had a great deal of work, having no such help as in other hard regiments in the shape of non-commissioned officers and veterans. I have also engaged Dr. Zee in that capacity. This gives him the rank of College Assessor and to boot the Vladimir Cross. It was he who was formerly in the Chevalier Guards and the Kaclim Spa. He is entitled to the uniform of Divisional Surgeon: would you graciously allow him to wear it? I ought to ask you a thousand pardons once more for occupying you with such futile matters, but there is nothing else for it. Yours, heart and soul, dear, for life.

58.

November 10th.

As Chernichev reports, he has taken at the same time three French expresses, whose papers are of the utmost importance. I was meaning to wait for their coming to send you off this, but I got yesterday, as I was going to bed, a despatch from Marshal announcing the great news that General Dufoir of the French Guard made known on being made prisoner. A revolution has taken place at Paris. The Empress has had to leave, and Lavary has been arrested. That is all I know about it, and I hasten to send off Wardemburg to you, telling you that I love you more than ever.

Excited as I was yesterday, I forgot to report that the evening before last I had your letter, dear, with the report on the battalion: I kiss your feet over it. It is more than kind on your part, and to have thought of the reserve company shows you a soldier's sister. Your

wishes as to Obolensky shall be carried out, and as for Zee, tell him to put on that uniform. I am also going to put something in Orders regarding Naguel. I greatly regret Tûshchkov, although he was to blame in the battle of Borodino for not having supported Bagration in time. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

XXXVII.

YAROSLAVL,

November 15th.

This morning Wardenburg came, and I have nothing more pressing than to express to you all my gratitude, dear : I assure you it is most sincere, for the devotion I bear you is beyond comparison. You are my benefactor, nay, more, you are my friend, and if I am in trouble, it is because I thought your friendship for me and George had changed and we were no longer anything to you. That vexed me sorely, for no other feelings ever entered our hearts than those of the purest devotion, and even our unrest and repeated requests to serve you which we made are the most certain proofs of it. You put the crown to your boons by the pains you took in searching for the papers of the deceased. I assure you you confound me by them. Reckoning by time, it was after my marriage and at the last attempt he made at an approach that he went off to Moldavia and apparently burned them, seeing his hopes brought to nought. As for your main letter and my answer, it seems there was mistake on both sides, at which I am delighted : I wept enough over it, for, loving you as I do, I feel all the more anything from you. I was horrified, too, by the inactivity in which George lay floundering, for by your

decree of the spring at the Senate, he could not even perform his duties. He is at your orders, and only eager to distinguish himself. We are leaving day after to-morrow for Tver, which brings us nearer the place he is bound for, and will await your further decisions there. I kiss your hands for having remembered to impart to us the good news from Paris : Providence be thanked for them from Tver. I cannot express to you all the pleasure I felt at seeing you were back again at your home, and all my thankfulness to God for having kept it from all mischance. Ah ! I join you in repeating, may we soon find ourselves gathered together there again, it will be one of the happiest days of my life. In some days from now you will get a post from me telling you of my departure, and George will then make by Vitebsk for Wittgenstein's force, where he will find me.

Thank God all still goes well, and to-day I have news that Wittgenstein has defeated Napoleon on the Beresina : 20 guns, a flag, and some thousands of prisoners. Farewell, friend, love to George, and am, heart and soul, yours ever.

XXXVIII.

November 24th.

I can fancy that it is as irksome to you as to us, dear, to be perpetually besieged on one point, but the more one has your friendship and benefits the more one should be fain not to cease to deserve them. You fixed a week as the time for your departure, hence about the same for that of George : this space has gone by, and, as military events are drawing to an end, every day grows more precious to him who has still all to gain if he would keep honourably the coat he wears : I beseech

you, let George go to the front and, as you can spend no time in answering, send a word of assent, for there is not a moment to spare. In case George rejoins you, my purpose is to remain at Tver, if you have no objection. I stop there, dear and kind friend, telling you once more that to be fonder of you than we two are is impossible. I embrace you, heart and soul.

59.

PETERSBURG,

November 22nd.

I hope, dear friend, that this express will be at Tver on the 24th. Hence I begin by good wishes for your birthday, and telling you that no one, be sure, makes more earnest prayers for your welfare and satisfying in everything than I, since I could not be more devoted to you than I am. A moment since I received your kind letter of the 19th. You have forced Fortune to favour you by not making peace: that resoluteness ensures you immortal glory. You fight alone, for those who second you are wretched creatures, and if the award of arms is in our favour it is only a fresh mercy of God, for men have little desert about it. Do not be angry with me if I remind you of your plans for Poland: your reputation busies me unceasingly. Many thanks over Obolensky and Zee. The battalion marched on the 12th; Kleinmichel saw it manœuvre and gain ofttime. I thought I ought to give notice of it to the Marshal, begging him to attach it to the Corps of Count Pahlen, if he has a separate one, if not, to General Doktorov's. I made the acquaintance of Pahlen* here. Pardon, a

* One of the sons of Count Peter.

thousand times pardon for all this importunity, but every man is allowed to set store by his honour. Besides, George is no good to you at all at present, but he has every need of showing himself worthy under all conditions of the friendship that is so dear to him. Yours, heart and soul.

XXXIX.

TVER,

November 25th.

This morning there came the officers of George's office with your letter, good friend, which gave me keen pleasure, for when you say you love me that makes me happy, cherishing you as I do with all my heart. It is very good of you to remember my birthday: I spent it very quietly at my favourite spot which reminds me of so many happy days. George is very impatient to go to the front: may both of you only betake yourselves there to be present at the finale which your determination entitles you to hope for! May I stay here, or what am I to do? I congratulate you on the good news from the front. It is certain our Heavenly Father puts Himself out of the way more than men. The delight is general, and the Marshal shines with a splendour that the man does not deserve. It is annoying to see so much honour heaped on a pretty unworthy head, and you are, I opine, even more unlucky on the military side than on the civil.

I have been invited to be, forgive me the expression, patroness of the Patriotic Society of the Ladies of Tver and Yaroslavl, by the Petersburg ladies. I asked Mother what my course should be, she told me to apply to you: well, dear friend, what do you say? I am always very

ready to be good for all you may wish. I dare not pester you more, dear, and embrace you with all my heart. Continue to love a sister who is very tenderly attached to you. To follow George is, I fancy, not possible, as also to see you ?

XL.

TVER,

November 26th.

Gagarin's going affords me a new occasion to write to you, dear, and sing you my everlasting refrain that I love you. He is going on business to Petersburg, but should George have to leave he will come back first. Pray, if the messenger with the order to him is not already sent off when you send, let Gagarin know that he may come back on the spot.

I have another charitable request to make to you : allow me, at my expense, if there is no other way he can go on the strength of the body, to put the younger brother of Priklonsky* in the Pages. He had a house at Moscow, which was his only property : it burned, and he is reduced to live with his numerous family on his gains. My brother-in-law leaves this evening for the front : George and I await your orders. Your printed rescript to Count Rostopchin is out : it will be a fine column you are going to put up at Moscow ; I only wish the base may be the grave of Napoleon. What am I to tell you from here save that we live happily, thanks to each other, and praying for your constant happiness. Farewell, friend, keep on loving her who is yours, heart and soul. George sends a thousand greetings : not knowing for how long

* Paul Priklonsky, Court Chamberlain to the Grand Duchess at Tver.

and on what footing you go to the front, I dare not request to follow George, but, remember, I count on your friendship as you may on my being reasonable, should it seem impossible to you.

I have written nothing to Mother as to myself or my plans, wishing to do nothing without previously consulting you.

XL I.

TVER,

November 29th.

I am very sorry, friend, to bother you again with my epistles, but you will see yourself the thing cannot be done otherwise. Here is a post. They tell me there is a due form, but I found it too absurd to only write to you officially. That is why I add these lines, embracing you with my whole heart. George is at your feet.

XL II.

TVER,

December 5th.

Another request, but for all the little wish I have it is sometimes impossible to let you be. You are making a fresh levy, and I have only been able to get you sixty desirous to have their heads broken in your service, hence my reserve company is in sorry case: my goodwill is endless, but no one can do impossibilities. Be so good then as to say a word to M. Gûriev to have handed over to me those of Kostroma and Novgorod, as being the nearest to here of my fiefs: that will be

Kostroma 148, and Novgorod 74, or 222 in all. You will greatly oblige me by doing so. I am writing to Gûriev an official and a private note, which I put in this cover. If you do not agree, burn them both. Here, my friend, is great boldness on my part, but I am accustomed to reckon on your bounties. Love from George and me.

XLIII.

TVER,
December 7th.

There is certainly nothing more assured than your fondness for us or on which I count more: your note that Mother sent me is a great proof thereof. Likewise, you have no one more sincerely devoted to you than we, but how is it that, despite your wish to make us happy, dear, you put George on the rack? Listen in patience and for the last time, though I am merely appealing to your *justice*. George, at your order, put on military garb when he took up the Service, and assured you that at the first shot fired against France he would be there. Since then, what has befallen his Father has only tended to confirm him in the resolve. He kept his word, for at the moment when the rupture looked like coming, he asked you for *a regiment*. I know the grounds on which you refused him it, and say nothing, for to be with you and be useful to you is what he prefers to any personal halo. When you came away from the front, you insisted he should do the same, and for the same reason. Well, that was a good move, but in a month the levies were ready, and my man requested to go back. "If George has not started yet, tell him

to wait for a full-length letter I shall write you in a few days." He waits, and there comes a letter bidding him still stay. Fresh request and answer, "I am off, we will go together." I see no other objective for your journey than to decide with the Marshal on the future operations, which is more political than military, and very well for the Emperor of Russia, but very ill for his servant George, who has had the good fortune of grovelling four months, not counting that when he worked for the levy; might do when the enemy was still at Smolensk, but since, why so, pray? You have smelled powder, and, even if you never had, an Emperor has something else to do. You are not going as yet, so there is George reduced to inactivity without visible end. He wants nothing out of the way, but either to be at the front or, left obscure, never again to put on a coat he does not deserve, and go back wholly to his duties, trying at least to make a name for himself in that line. Own that it is brave, nay, more, you would have done as much in his place. This letter is as if I spoke to you and upon my honour there is not the least bitterness in my soul: for that matter I am very foolish to want to prove it, for the reverse would be very ridiculous in us. If you have intentions and do not wish to tell them, well and good. If so, answer that we have only to be patient, but if all our patience past, present, and future, is only to lead to the old rut, it must be owned it is a wanton waste of that virtue, and to put George in a quandary, for he harnessed for war, only to remain at home, and in public opinion, which you know we do not make our idol of, that looks like anything but what's good.

Weigh it and decide. That is much on a worn-out theme, but to crush his conscience is not easy for a man of honour.

We embrace you, heart and soul.

December 8th.

I held back my letter yesterday, and now add that George is ill. He has had fever for two days. I hope it will be nothing, the doctor assures me so. Hark you, if this letter annoys or pains you, I beg your pardon therefor, and vow it is written without a shade of ill-humour : perhaps you see more clearly than we, and good advice will always be received with gratitude. Yours, dear, and that right heart and soul.

60.

December 6th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I am off in an hour. So George can get on the way at once and come and meet me at Vilna, which has just been re-occupied by our troops. All that Divine Providence does for us is above all expression. As for you, dear, I take it is best you should stay behind. It is not a lady's place to be round armies, and it warrants others to do the same, which only serves to add to the following of the army, which is but too great. As for the Society of Philanthropic Dames,* why should you not consent to become one ?

Priklonsky is enrolled in the body of Pages ; the matter of the two officers of your battalion set right. That, I think, is an end to all your business, but what will never have an end is the true devotion I bear you, and which can never be outdone. So, too, when you make excuses to me on the importunity of our letters, that vexes me

* Society founded by the Empress Elizabeth. It might be that owing to the strained relations between them the Grand Duchess did not care to belong to it. See also letter 39.

each time. Ah, when shall we again be seated on our terrace, busied with the welfare of humanity? Farewell, dear friend, I press you to my heart a thousand times, and am yours for life.

XLIV.

December 15th.

MY BROTHER!

He* is dead. I have lost everything! Give me this house, I beg it of you as a favour: if you will not bury him in the fortress, let me build a chapel for him. I know where; in the meanwhile I will keep him in the house: in that way, at any rate, I shall be able to see him every day. I will build a chapel, too, where I can see and be with him. He loved you greatly, and charged me to tell you so. Answer me soon, and think of him.

61.

VILNA,

December 21st.

MY DEAR, UNFORTUNATE FRIEND,

What can I say to you at such a terrible juncture and when my own heart feels that you are one of the most unhappy beings on earth. It does not lie with me to offer you a thousand consolations. If I have lost in him a genuine friend, and one whose like there are few of in the world, and if with him has vanished one of the dearest delights of my life—that of the sight of your domestic bliss—you, on the other hand, have seen the whole happiness of your life disappear. Dear, dear

* Death of Prince George on that day at Tver.

Katia, I simply dare not let my thoughts dwell on you. At least assure yourself that no one shares your grief as I do, because no one knew George better than I. The Supreme Being has so willed it ; your duty is not to *repine* : dear one, despite all your grief, in the name of the God in Whom you have always believed, do not forget this that I say to you. I conclude, for I have not the strength to go on. To speak to you of your health, and the care you should take of yourself, is all merely verbiage : it is to God that I commend you, invoking Him from the very depth of my heart for your preservation. As for your happiness, it is gone, and with it a vital portion of mine. Wholly yours, ever.*

62.

VILNA,
December 28th.

DEAR AND TRUSTY FRIEND,

I have received your letter. There is no need to say to what extent it wrung my soul : you know my devotion to you and to George, and the thought of your

* Here is what the Empress Elizabeth says on this occasion in a letter to her Mother of January 1st, 1813 (n.s.) : " Scarcely was she confined than she left the Emperor neither peace nor peace on sending her husband to the front ; neither the Emperor nor the Grand Duke Constantine being there, it could only be with a view to having an agent there who would keep her informed of what was going on, and she came here" (to Petersburg) " meanwhile to intrigue on her own account with the Emperor. *She is not sly enough for such a restless ambition as hers*, and in this instance her plans were quite plain even to her Mother, who one day let slip, ' I don't know what Katia wants, she has the finest Provinces in Russia and is not content.' She was asked meanwhile to keep quiet at Yaroslavl, and Prince George never went to the front. She has got the promise he should go there with the Emperor when he went back, and the enemy, retreating headlong, thereupon they went back to Tver, from which she wrote, ' I am waiting, I am waiting ! ' Poor woman ! She did not know what she was waiting for, for the express that was to send George off to Vilna in the Emperor's train found him already ill." (Grand Duke Nicholas, " The Empress Elizabeth.")

sorrow grieves me so I cannot tell. I was going to answer that all I wished was to comply with your own wishes, if that might be, when I received the letter here appended. It will inform you of the reasons there are against it. You are too reasonable to insist, and you may be sure how much it costs me, above all at such a time, not to anticipate your wishes in every way, as I loved so to do in other matters. A precious portion of my happiness has been extinguished with yours.

As for the Tver house, it is yours for life, and even beyond if you care : I have always looked on it as such, so do with it as you will. Ah, how pleased I should be if I could gratify your desires and that you would give me the chance : it is a true solace you would be affording me. To love you more passionately than I do could not be, but what is the use of that love to you ? You will not remain any the less the most unhappy being on earth, and it is my inability to mend it that harasses me.

Farewell, dear, wholly yours with all the powers of my heart. Kiss the Duke and Auguste from me.*

1813.

XLV.

TVER,

January 1st.

It is some days, dear friend, since I received your letter of the 21st, and yesterday evening that of the 25th. What should I say to you except that they are like you ? Accept my thanks for your bounties, your affection of the moment ; it is to you, next to him, that

* Father and brother of the departed Prince George.

I owed my happiness. He was perfect, but God justly found it was too much for a mortal, and He was right : He took to Him the one that was ripe for eternity. I do not repine, for I had the bliss to be with him to his last sigh. He adored you and, next to me, you were what he cherished most in the world. Here is a paper he wrote for you some days before he fell ill, and which he meant to hand you himself : it was the last that he wrote. During his illness he bade me send it you, but I did not do so, hoping he might still hand it you : I have some of his hair for you. He was an angel, I was not worthy of him. You have some debts to pay for him, for he had good instruments. I tell you that as his friend, I do not know how to tell you as I take it. On reaching Petersburg it shall be my first care. He leaves to-morrow, and I with him. He will be in a *chambre ardente* beside St. Peter's Church until my own is ready. I am well, do not be afraid. You have been my friend, judge then of what you are to me. I embrace you with all my heart.

XLVI.

TSARSKOE SELO,
January 6th.

I think I am bound to tell you I am here, kind friend : I am well and in no pain anywhere. I am not yet able to speak to you of those who were with George, for some of them are not to my hand. Embraces, with all my heart.

XLVII.

TSARSKOE SELO,
January 8th.

Do not answer me, but do not deny me the comfort of speaking to him who was his friend and whom he cherished. You have lost the most faithful of your friends: he was an angel; well, God willed it, it must be well. Here is his hair, do not throw it away, but, if you don't want it, send it to me. I would fain see you, but don't know when that will be. See to it when you write, for one wants reciprocity, since I am shown what you write her. It is abominable to deceive! Keep well, and do not forget.

They speak of a trip for me, but not as yet to me: I desire it, if the thing may be done, to take me out of myself, for my head is none too good. However, I will speak to her about it, for comedies are not to my liking, yet she is very kind to me.

XLVIII.

ST. PETERSBURG,
January 11th.

Here, dear friend, is the list of those for whom I have to claim not less your bounties as Emperor than your remembrance as friend of him whom they served: I have set them down according to seniority and with the sincerity I owe you. Of my health, what am I to say to you? I rarely feel bad anywhere, and then it is only in the chest, yet I am not well, and that ill is one

men have no power to remedy. I owe thanks to everybody for what they do for me : you owe the same and gratitude, as do I, to General de Vollant. That old man loved him like a son : he should be shown all deference, and I should claim it if ever you see him. Keep well and love me always.

The A.D.C.'s are awaiting your orders here ; be good enough to let me have them. What do you decide as to my brother-in-law ? Is he to go to the front at Reval or stay ? Father and son leave it with you, not knowing whether there is still any chance of distinction in the field. Yesterday Mother talked of my trip as a certain thing. I dared not hope for it, but am delighted with it, for my head spins over myself, but do not fear anything. I shall not make myself guilty in the eyes of him to whom I owed four years of the most perfect happiness. Forgive this letter, but it costs me much to make my ideas coherent, and it is several days I have been writing at the paper herewith. Much obliged for your remembrance.

63.

JOHANNISBURG,
January 13th.

I have got, at two days' interval, my dear sweet friend, yours from Tver and that from Tsarskoe Selo. How good of you in your state to think of me. Be sure there is not a moment in the day that you are not in my thoughts. Your state pierces my heart, because I know all you have lost. He was my friend, and I learned to know him. No purer, better being ever existed. The resignation with which you submit to the

will of God makes you still dearer to my heart, because it proves to me you are nearer the road he trod than I ventured to hope. I await with impatience what you want to send me on the people who were about him. I have long wished to take *Sabir* for A.D.C. The only reason I did not was not to deprive him of a good subordinate. I want no end to do so now, if you think that is seemly. The last paper of his that you sent me is dear to me beyond all saying, his soul is wholly depicted in it : I will speak to you of it one day if God brings us together again. Farewell, dear, it is to God I commend you that He may sustain you. Yours, heart and soul, for life. Tell Niuschka* that never in my life did I think of having anything against her, and it even seemed to me she did what another would have done in her place. A thousand greetings to her.

XLIX.

ST. PETERSBURG,
January 21st.

I received yesterday evening your letter of the 13th, dear friend, and thank you for it with all my heart. What can be dearer to me than the fondness of him whom he cherished and to see that being disposed to honour his memory ? Do not let that feeling be fictitious in you, it would be unworthy of your heart. Before passing to the head of *Sabir* allow me a word on my poor self : I am awaiting with great impatience your permission to leave. That, they tell me, is necessary for my health, but that is very little to me : it matters to me, though

* The English governess, Mrs. Druss.

in a more vital respect, that of my moral tendencies, and I do not deny that I cannot conquer myself. Sometimes there takes hold of my soul impulses so impetuous that I blame myself for them : all I aim at is that others shall not see them. Although I have only reason to praise you and everyone, my existence weighs on me : by getting away I shall gain time and command of myself. If you can, do not refuse me : my present situation delivers me from several things which might have bothered you but for that, and makes the thing easier, methinks. There is a talk of the waters of Eger, and passing the winter in some warm climate, which the circumstances will then determine. I ought to go away as soon as possible, and am charmed at the goodwill Mother puts into it, for she anticipates me. I have said I wanted to go in the first half of March, to get the benefit of the last sledging in Russia, the sooner the better. My attacks are more daily ones, but the last, day before yesterday, was worse than the others, and twice over with only an hour between. Your present distance makes it such that an answer needs more than a fortnight, which would bring us to the beginning of February. My arrangements are going on and almost finished, for I lived almost always on the main roads, so it is nothing new for me, but I am afraid they might drag, and that would be annoying. Forgive this disquisition. Listen, one thing more weighs on my mind, I swear to you first of all that they don't even know I am writing ; do not forget my father-in-law. It is too soon yet, but I will leave you a paper which I owe to George's memory and the honour of my children. He was to have told you the thing, but God willed otherwise. I shall strictly carry out his intentions ; one cannot compound with one's duties and one's conscience. Read his last paper, you will see he talks to you of your obligations in Germany.

The State may have no heart, but the man of honour is bound by his word. Do me the favour to tell me if you have had the Prince's official report dated October 14th, written with his own hand in answer to your Ukaz, touching Kologrivoff, the Governor of Tver, the one dated October 8th. I am concerned over it for George. As to the name of my younger son, I have not the courage to change anything he did for a simple personal wish, although the Duke agreed very willingly, and then I have not the strength to call the little one by the name which is so dear to me. Two days after my letter as to George's A.D.C.'s, I got one from Sabir reminding me of his intentions, which I can bear witness to, of making him substantive chief of a district with the rank of Major-General, which attaches to it. As thereby he would drop out of the Army List, that can neither shock nor inconvenience anyone. Sabir clings to the place, and naturally, for it is a good one, and he has been distinguishing himself in it for three years. I have had it put to him, if by chance the matter did not come about, which he would prefer—to stay as he is or become your A.D.C. He does not want to change; General de Vollant, in his quality of George's deputy, will put it before you likewise in official form. George wanted to speak to you of it, as also of several things which I keep for the next post.

Niuschka is at your feet; she will make the journey with me, I hope, which I greatly like. Can you, roughly speaking, and by a secret channel, if it cannot be otherwise, tell me if I shall see you here again, as I leave the 12th or 14th of March; or, if I take the route through Galicia, which seems to me preferable to that through Prussia, whether I shall be able to see you somewhere on the way. Excuse this long letter, and believe me, yours, heart and soul.

64.

JULAVA,
January 20th.

Volkonsky handed me, dear friend, your letter from Tsarskoe Selo, with the precious present you make me. It will never leave me again. It is not play-acting, for that, as you know, I hate, but because I lost in him a real friend, and shall mourn him for ever. Be assured, dear, that each line of yours is received with an emotion I cannot express to you. Also I am cross with you for the terms you made use of. My tender attachment to you and George was too well known to you to have the right to doubt it for a moment. I think the journey proposed will be beneficial to you, and I urge you strongly to persist in the idea. If I could see you for a moment what a consolation it would be to me ! But at the same time I am too candid not to tell you that the sight of you in the sorrow you are in would be killing to me, though, at the same time, I feel a real need to see you again. Farewell, dear, seek some solace with Him on Whom we all depend : it is the only One I can point you to. Wholly yours, heart and soul, to my last breath.

65.

RATSIOUS,
January 22nd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

At 10 o'clock this morning I sat down to write you my answer to your big letter. I was interrupted, and here it is nine in the evening without their having let me breathe for a second. I am therefore forced to let the post go, and send it you by the first going. Yours wholly.

66.

PLOTSK,

January 25th.

I was prevented, dear friend, as I told you, writing this letter to you by the last post. The trouble you took in your state to write the list yourself touched me much. Here is what I proposed for them, and what I think I ought to do to satisfy justice and my gratitude to George.

Sabir, Basil Obolensky,* Arseniev,† Bartolomei,‡ and even Alexander Obolensky (if you wish it for this latter), I will take as my own A.D.C.'s. At the same time, the two Obolenskys will remain in command of their respective troops. Arseniev, while my A.D.C., will always be at your disposal, and so can have the satisfaction of wearing military uniform.

As for the others, not being of the same rank nor as long in George's service, I propose to promote them all. In this way Timrot§ becomes Colonel (it is not long since he was only Captain in the Army), and Naguel|| to boot. Wardenburg becomes Captain in the Guards, equivalent to Lieutenant-Colonel, and thus more than Major, which is what you asked for: at the same time he can be transferred to the German Legion, if you wish it. Yazykov** will become second Captain, and return to you when the war is over. Rostopchin†† is

* Prince Basil Obolensky (1780-1834), elder brother of Alexander, Colonel and Prince George's A.D.C.

† Dmitri Arseniev (1779-1846), retired as Lieutenant-Colonel in 1815.

‡ Alexis Bartolomei, A.D.C. to Prince George, later Lieutenant-General.

§ Timrot, Captain in Ismailovski Regiment, A.D.C. to Prince George.

|| Naguel, Captain in Ismailovski Regiment, A.D.C. to Prince George.

** Dmitri Yazykov, Gentleman of the Chamber at the Grand Duchess's Court.

†† Count Sergius Rostopchin (1795-1835), son of the celebrated Commandant of Moscow in 1812, and known for his irregularities, could make no career.

already placed in the Chevalier Guards. As for Born,* dear, I find you ask too little for him, and take pleasure in sending you herewith the Cross in diamonds.

As for the Office papers, I ask no better than that they should be yours. Only arrange with Born, who is bound to know them all, that those that might be wanted on the spot be copied and the copies sent where they are wanted. It is General de Vollant I have named to carry on the matter of the communications: thus the dispatch rests with him. But I found that Serebriakov should, anyhow, be rewarded, having always earned George's praise. I shall give proportionate rewards in the same way to all the employees of the Office of the Governor-General. Send me also a list of his body servants: I should like to do something for them, too.

So then, dear, that's what I think is required. If you are content, a word to me and the thing will be done on the spot. The accounts I have of your health grieve me past all telling, because I feel only too much there is no remedy therefor. I wish I could know you were already under way. Who knows? Perhaps when you are at Carlsbad we shall be able to meet somewhere. Oh, how I should love it! I feel a need past all saying. Farewell, dear friend, in pity spare yourself, and put your trust in God. Yours wholly, heart and soul. Tell the Duke I will write to him next post.

L.

ST. PETERSBURG,
January 23rd.

In forwarding to you an official report from one of your Departments, I know I am doing wrong.

* Born, "College Councillor," Secretary to Prince George.

My excuse is that it is the Prince's last wishes as to his subordinates, wishes several of which were known to me. I can assure it is the first and last time I shall be guilty of such an irregularity. I wrote to you by the last post concerning Colonel Sabir. I can answer for having known George's desire as to Colonel Manfredi, whom Generals Barclay and Bennigsen may arrest. It is most unfortunate for him that his chief, who wanted to take him back with him into the field, was not able to put before you the reasons for what seems a tremendous boon, but is only a piece of justice. As for Ribachkov, the paper comprising the representation to you was all ready, but the Prince had not the strength left to sign it. As for the other requests, except that in favour of Major Holle, he is doing me genuine service.

At this moment I am brought your letter of the 22nd. A thousand thanks again for having thought of me. I await with impatience your long letter and embrace you.

LI.

ST. PETERSBURG,

February 2nd.

Seek, in my gratitude, my devotion to you, in my love for George, the symptoms of the feeling yours of the 25th caused me to experience. It is my friend that traced every word, the title would make it doubly dear, if that were possible. You and your heart are reflected there, friend: what a sense of inward content you must have experienced after having written it! As for Sabir, your kindnesses cannot serve him, as you will have seen by one of my latest letters. Basil and

Alexander Obolensky will certainly be extremely happy, likewise Bartolomei, and I thank you for them, as also Timrot and Naguel. Do, pray, in Wardenburg's case, crown your bounties by making him, as you said, Captain in the Guards, and, by a subsequent order, transfer him as Lieutenant-Colonel to the German Legion. It is likewise perfectly well done for Yazykov and Rostopchin. Yours was an act of justice, I venture to say, as much of grace towards Born, who is affected to tears by it, the sheerest tribute that he can bear to the memory of him to whom he owes your kindnesses. As for the Office papers, I kiss your hands a thousand and a thousand times. Born will go and take them over and put them in order as you wish it, but I think there should be as well some one of more weight, Born being only the Prince's private secretary, so that, if there should be any malversation or irregularity, he might be entitled to take cognisance of it, arraign and prosecute. Born never was nor wishes to be a party to anything like that. Unhappily, the nature of the people and the matters forbids this precaution : I therefore suggest to you M. Bichorets, who has already been twice employed by George to revise the Office at the various changes of administrators it has undergone : his mission at Novgorod being over, and he not wishing. I had no knowledge of them, but General de Volland's guarantee of them is as valid as mine. I must again perhaps plead guilty to a breach of rule : my excuse is the same and humanity its ægis. He wanted to beg your pardon in words. A French prisoner, named Loup, a Lieutenant-Colonel, having been brought in with seven wounds during our stay at Yaroslavl, and having had some protests to make, became an inmate of ours. This man was notable for the loftiness of his feelings and conduct. George had talk with him, but I never saw him. The Prince, having done

all he could for him, and holding it cruel to desert the poor wretch where humanity was not in its stronghold, had him brought to Tver in our train, and I had orders to continue the same attentions to him after G. left. I therefore took the liberty of bringing him here, where he arrived yesterday, with Arseniev, who is surety for him, as are all my household, where he is under supervision, the police being advised of him. You will not, I hope, withdraw a charity. The man is only French, they say, by name, not at all in manners or ways : he does not go out or see strangers, and puts a delicacy into his actions much to be praised. I feel I owe him gratitude for that he bears to George. If ever I see you again I really must speak to you touching the communications : it would be to acquit my conscience. Forgive this fresh importunity. Yours, heart and soul, dear, and that for life.

LII.

ST. PETERSBURG,
January 27th.

I again deeply beg your pardon, dear friend, for pestering you : Mdle. Mednicker had a nephew, named Brandorf, brought up at the Institute of Communications, and little fit for other work. Allow me to take him into my battalion as Ensign, according to the privilege of the Corps of Engineers, after the manner of those I have already.

I await with great impatience, I own, the determining of my fate : your assent matters greatly to me. Farewell, friend, keep well and love me always a little.

LIII.

ST. PETERSBURG,
January 29th.

How convey to you the feelings your letter of the 20th caused me? No, you must not take offence if an unhappy being fears to be a charge to you: never does a doubt of you enter my mind, but it grieves me to cause you some. I am well, the journey will do me good, they say, and I think so, too. I still do not lose hope of seeing you. If I had not so many reasons for holding you dear, you would become so when I think how George loved you. Dear friend, God preserve you always from feeling what I experience. Farewell; forget not a sister who is much attached to you.

Arseniev, out of friendship to me, wants to leave the Army; I will write to you about it next time, to go on serving in the transport, I do not see what hindrance there could be. If you have nothing against it these two gentlemen, with one or two subordinates, could start together and work at it in company. Do by a word in reply give me the right to commission them to do so. As for what I wanted to say to you with regard to the transit, it is a thing which is much desired by General de Vollant, although, to start with, not his idea: I shall wait to learn if you wished to be informed about it. I have written to you already about Serebriakov, who will only be all the more flattered at your having thought about him yourself. However painful and little my way it may be to stop you in your benefactions, I owe it, however, to justice; do nothing for the clerks of the government office. If he had lived another fortnight he would perhaps have had to exercise a severity quite alien to his nature. In a word, the office would have undergone

great changes : herewith is a list showing the only three of these beings who deserve your good offices. I request to take Mékinin into my office as councillor, in place of Brunner, whom I strike out, as the man is leaving me. He is the brother of Arakchiév, A.D.C., and a very suitable person in all respects. You will find on the same list Jordan, who acted as his secretary during this campaign, and whom you have always known as an excellent fellow. I hope it is not against etiquette to give him a step or a cross. As for his body-servants, there were two, *Kleuke*, who was first in the scale and position, and *Meincke* : both showed like zeal and attachment to him in his illness. But since you are concerned for his dependants, I will further claim your bounty for two beings who belonged to him : both have just been with me and will even make the journey with me, to wit, *Bach*, his physician, who has suffered nearly as much as I from the bereavement, and *Buchmann*, his secretary and private treasurer. They are "College" and "Court" Councillors respectively : a cross to each, though of different class, would be, I think, the sheer limit of their ambition. I will add that *Bach* also worked hard among the sick in the hospitals at Yaroslavl. If I am too pressing, it is your fault. My friend and George's, why cannot you read in my heart ? There, now, friend, reply with the frankness your bounties have justified. You will find on the same list *Bychowetz* and *Drébusch* : the first has served 38 years with high credit, and is generally valued as a man of business and character. If you make him Governor at Tver—for I doubt if *Kologrivoff*, after your Ukaz and other things none too creditable, can remain—you will have a man there who will keep up in George's sense and spirit the work he did. *Drebusch* was for leaving the place of procurator, you know he is energetic and talented :

if you give him the step he wants, and the first vacancy as lieutenant-governor, that would be the summit. You know Yegorov, he was the only one that did anything worth mentioning. George took him with him on his tours ; he is no schemer, and works hard.

I come to the head I have most at heart, but I must, before mentioning Arseniev, talk to you of another object who, though dependent in one respect, is quite independent in others. You know what Gagarin has always been to me. I asked you a favour lately at my confinement : you did not grant it. I ask you another at this moment, and here are my reasons : He has had no advancement in the service since I married, and his prospects in this respect can only be a matter of your favour ; he has been passed over many times, as you know, and is now, but for Alex. Galitzin, senior at court ; it seems to me, therefore, that by rights he should be made substantive privy councillor. If you had seen the way he acted on that sorrowful occasion, I think you would have no objection. By giving him that step, you avoid the need of making him titular chief officer to me, as that does not suit me. Only say in the Ukaz : attached to Her Highness with rank of master of the household. By mixing up the civil service and court list you destroy absolutely the career of those employed in the latter who, naturally, are always supplanted or side by side with more showy people.

If you can manage this for me, do, and then appoint Arseniev substantive privy councillor with the duties of equerry. If you cannot, then he will accept gratefully the post of A.D.C., although it is as strange as unpleasant to have about me people who in no sense belong to me, the calling of arms having always certain obligations attaching to the uniform. To appoint him without promoting Gagarin equerry would be to deprive

the latter of a post without compensation : the riband even would not be one *in this respect*.

If, then, you do not assent to this arrangement, make Arseniev your A.D.C. with the others, and put down your reasons on a separate sheet, which I need not show ; for the other decisions of this kind I cannot be silent about, and your letters for that matter were all fit to show, and here it is delicacy that goes against it. Be good enough also to have the Ukazes sent, as I am off, and the distance between us will increase. My health is no better, I am growing weaker daily. I embrace you with all my heart, and cannot thank you enough for what you do for me. You see I speak to you openly, from the heart. Farewell ; may we soon see each other again.

Do not forget my father-in-law, who awaits your orders.

LIV.

ST. PETERSBURG,

February 4th.

The fact will afford me a better excuse than any preambles, for all the vexation I must cause you. Princess Volkonsky has a " place " near Moscow, known as Voronovo, inherited from Prince Repnin, which Governor Obreskov rented off her last spring with a view to his living there. Instead, without saying a word, he set up there the construction of a large balloon, then of a powder magazine and other inflammable matters. He has had made there, quite contrary to any ordinary lease, conduits of brick, &c. The French, on occupying



Marshall Kutusoff

Moscow, first rummaged the factory of this infernal machine and, to destroy wholly the remaining materials, burned the house, of which no trace is left : you know that they contented themselves with pillaging other manors. You will tell me that the Princess is in easy circumstances all the same : nay, I will do her the justice to say that she took it very sportingly. I should not have mentioned it to you if she was not going, and served me for love : to estimate the loss is impossible, for at what rate, past or present ? It seems to me that the matter, being unique, is therefore worthy of your paying some attention to it. I come back to the subject of Gagarin, for I am so little sure of giving my exact thought in writing, seeing my weakness of mind, that I believe there is wisdom in comments. He would like a *big post*, no matter which, and the rank attaching to it, then to be *seconded* to my service. I desire it also, and for more than one reason. I remember also, in my last letter, having pointed out that Arseniev *accepts* the post of A.D.C. ; that is as if he had ever thought of bargaining. No ! Now, he is very grateful for your bounties, and it is I who no longer know how to write. I am greatly concerned he should stay with me, and, if you secure it to me in this shape, it is all I need. As to Wardenburg, I hope you will certainly be so good, once the Legion is done away with, to take him back into Russian service and the Guards : he is a very fine fellow, the Duke and he are equally interested in his appointment coming quickly. I congratulate you over Warsaw, you acted like yourself, and embrace you with all my heart.

LV.

ST. PETERSBURG,
February 10th.

It is my fate to become unbearable, I feel it only too much. Here is a letter from Gagarin, the contents of which are known to me. Moreover, kindly allow the Prince's assistant and one of his servants, who were freedmen and volunteers, to reckon themselves of the Court and my household. You will remember you forbade me to take any of that kind, which is why I am so placed as to importune you. Further, I ask you, in due form, leave to take Arseniev with me and Brunner, the despatch-rider. As they are in your service, I cannot make use of them without your assent. Again I must condemn myself, and ask you a favour: At Yaroslavl, I took a wet nurse for my little one, the wife of a recruit, who was still there in grey, belonging to the 2nd Yaroslavl Regiment, embodied by Urûsov. The man stayed behind ill when the regiment marched, and since, I have kept him with me. George was to ask you for him altogether, to be rated as groom, his name is Fyodor Ossipov. If you allow this, allow me also to tell Prince Gorchakov so; one man will not ruin you, though I confess my guilt. All the contents of this letter are rubbish, but there are things which cannot be done without you. I am off at the beginning of March by Kiev for Radzivilov: perhaps we shall meet there. Anyhow love her who will see in you always her benefactor and friend.

67.

KALICH,

February 19th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Although I have scarcely a moment, I cannot help telling you at least by a word how it is the sincerest of my wishes if I have succeeded in doing you some pleasure, and to tell you that all we agreed on together is already in progress. On the other points I am writing to you at length, which you will get by the next post. More than ever do I cherish the hope of seeing you at Carlsbad or Eger, seeing how things have turned. For God's sake, just be careful meanwhile of your health. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

LVI.

ST. PETERSBURG,

February 24th.

I assure you I am much more awkwardly placed than you, friend, for the kinder you are the more retiring ought I to be : but to whom should the Prince's people cling, if not to me ? The marshal of the notables of Novgorod showed up very well, as did they themselves, as you already know : the Prince promised him what is marked on the account before me and others, that I can certify. Perhaps you will find it much : remember what a juncture it then was, and that you had occasion to fire men's minds. Further, here is a list of the smaller clerks of the Prince's Office : I am not at variance with what I told you in one of my previous, for you will notice that the great people are left out. Give these poor beggars, who mostly have only their wage to live on, a

present of that of this year and let them be enrolled at the Heraldry, of course without pay, until they find places. Rossi's request I give up, though I wished it greatly, but, as it is my personal matter, I dare not insist if you find it too much. He and his two assistants might very well serve you for rebuilding the houses burnt in various towns. I answer for their energy and intelligence, I might even say their rectitude, for I have had much to do with them, and also seen them at their respective work, and never has there been anything to complain of. Gagarin has written to Count Tolstoy for some of my people with whom I am parting: being no longer able to keep house as hitherto, I am reducing my scale as much as possible. I think you will not blame me for it. The person jotted on this bill is one of those I can no longer do with. I have, besides, to ask you one thing, I don't know if it is feasible or not, at least I hope you will do what is in your power: My old Démidov in the stables has been in my service immemorially: would there be no way of giving him a decoration? You will find me very forward, and I beg your pardon for it, while embracing you with my whole heart.

68.

KALICH,

February 23rd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I have thought my head would turn these last days for the amount of work that has fallen on me all of a sudden, this alliance with the Prussians, the military dispositions resulting from it, the coming of General Scharnhorst, that of the English Ambassador, three special messengers from Copenhagen, Stockholm, and

London, Lebzeltern's arrival, that of the King of Prussia's A.D.C., Wrangel, lastly, the capture of Berlin, and all the military measures which must ensue, and all that at once in the space of these few days, so that I was nailed to my table or conferring with those gentlemen. At last here I am, with pen in hand, writing to you, and that you may judge of it all, I tell you it is half after midnight, and one of these gentlemen has only just left my room, after having kept me from 8 in the evening.

It is not I who made the regulation that folks at Court should rank in seniority with those who are in civil employ but have also Court ranks : it was so in the late Emperor's time as well. How, then, can I pass over the two Counts Saltikov, and so many others in like case, or promote them all ? But I am giving Gagarin the riband of St. Alexander, and I gratify his desire as to pay beforehand. You are too impartial, dear, to be angry with me for it. Wholly yours, etc.

LVII.

ST. PETERSBURG,

March 4th.

I cannot thank you enough, dear friend, for yours of the 19th, which I got yesterday. All that concerns the A.D.C.'s, dear, is settled, and Wardenburg goes to the German Legion as Lieutenant-Colonel. As for Arseniev, though my A.D.C., I put him wholly at your disposal, and give you leave to take him with you. Abroad, he will be reckoned your chamberlain, or attached some other way to your Court. I ask no better than that Bychowetz should be assistant to Born for the searching of the papers.

As to the post of Governor of Tver, at the time when George begged me to name one myself instead of Kologrivoff, wanting there to be a decent one in the part you lived in, I had the billet offered to Ozerof,* who was with my brother, and married Me. Volkov : he accepted, so I am pledged, but I will give Bykhovets† any other which falls vacant. As for Drébusch, the matter shall be seen to.

I greatly wish that you would inform me what you wanted to say about Rauzit. You are perfectly authorised to take Miakinin. The list you sent me will be adhered to in full, and orders are given in accordance. As for the body-servants, I propose to make one, Menke, *Kammerfourrier* (groom of the chamber), and to give the other the rank of *Mundschenk* (cupbearer), which carries with it that of captain. If this suits you, I write by this same post to Galitzin, so send word to him and he will see to the doing of the thing at once. *Bach* is to have the St. Anne of 2nd class, and *Buchmann* the St. Vladimir of the 4th. I am perfectly willing that Mlle. Aledinsky's nephew should go to your battalion.

As to Princess Volkonsky's seat,‡ I can assure you that if it was burnt, it was not owing to the balloon affair, for there was nothing of it left there. The French have treated several other seats in the same way, Count Saltikov's Marfino, Dm. Galitzin's Vesioma, and ever so many others. The whole was no more at Voronovo than a scaffolding to keep the balloon captive, as is always done, and that was broken before the enemy came. As for the two domestics, Brunner and *the recruit*, they are wholly at your orders. I think I have left out

* Peter Ozerof, Chamberlain, Master of the Household to the Grand Duke Constantine, Governor of Tver from 1813 to 1817, and Senator.

† Stephan Bykhovets, Governor of Nizhny Novgorod from 1813 to 1820.

‡ The hamlet of Sukhanovo, near Moscow, owned by Prince Peter Volkonsky.

nothing, and that is all. But what I cannot pass over in silence is the words you use regarding yourself: "*My fate is to become unbearable.*" If you knew what pain you cause me when you say such things, assuredly you would never use them again. You should know that my great pleasure is to be able to do you some, especially when you are so miserable. The taking of Berlin adds still more, dear, to the hope of seeing you at Carlsbad, for our left is to rest on Bohemia; I cannot even think now without the keenest emotion.

Farewell, dear friend, meanwhile do not wholly forget a friend who cherishes you from the bottom of his heart. It is $\frac{1}{4}$ past 1, my eyes go to, and I have still to write to Mother. I have not strength to write to the Duke, take him my excuses pray. As for Auguste, I wish in no way to hamper his decisions, the more so that I must tell you frankly they have some personal bearing on the Marshal. Apart from what he lightly hinted to me at Vilna, I perceived also on the other's part. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

P.S.—Dear sweet friend, I cannot convey to you what pain it gives me to be unable to gratify your desire with regard to Gagarin.* Your affection is one of the few enjoyments which remain to me. In any case, if you have scanty time, never put yourself out to write to me: I feel perfectly that your minutes must be precious to you. The hope of seeing you enchants me: I start at night, Saturday, and trust to pass the frontier on the 25th. I wish to ask you for your orders if you are not for making, for your greater convenience, an appointment with me in some hole in Silesia, only let it not be any headquarters or much-peopled place. I go by Teschen, Ohimty, and Prague, and I care little about roundabout ways, for I have time enough before the

* Prince Ivan Gagarin (1771-1832).

season. If that suits you, and you would point out the place and time roughly, no matter if I have to wait, I will beg you to transmit your orders to me through Galicia, that they may meet me on the way. I go to bed every night, and do not make long stages because of the little one. Perhaps the Austrian states will not suit you, barring which the shortest radius for you from Kalich is towards Vilichka, which is my route. But it is all one to me if I see you : arrange it as you think good. I am fairly well, my attacks recur regularly from day to day, but it is little matter. God grant you happiness, and fixity of the same ! Think a little of me who love you well. I have bidden my body-servant forward any letters of yours to me that may arrive after I leave by handing them to Miakinin, to whom I leave my house, who has instructions, so that they may reach me surely. I embrace you with all my heart.

LVIII.

ST. PETERSBURG,
March 6th.

Herewith a letter from the ex-governor of Tver, Uchakov : I am like Pilate. Here, however, is an office personal, and touching Galitzin, Governor of Yaroslavl, it seems to me it is pretty right. Here is one on the score of the widow of my dear post-master at Tver, who is just dead : it is genuine charity, and the deceased, as all those who knew him can vouch you, was a worthy man, very zealous in his service. Add to this Ilinsky, whom the Prince employed on special missions, having been trusted with sums of money and the building of

the hospitals at Yaroslavl, has just come here with his accounts, the work being finished : to whom is he to give over all his papers ? I do not like, as you know, to put my nose where it has no business, but all these folk of the Prince's, having lost their support, apply to me, and I cannot send them away. Forgive me for sending you the enclosed to my brother-in-law, but he is to appear in a few days at your head-quarters. I embrace you, heart and soul, dear.

LIX.

ST. PETERSBURG,
March 7th.

Let me first of all thank you for all your friendship : I assure it makes one of the few blessings that are left me, for, watching how you act to me, I think it was the best friend also of him I have lost. Forgive me, but I cannot wipe out that memory. Much obliged by what you have done for Gagarin : you have rendered me a great service, for my part I do not know how to requite him, he is good to me. He is very content. Very grateful also for all you have done for the A.D.C.'s, and *chinovniks* (minor officials) : there is no more I could wish, and towards George's people, great and small, you have outdone my expectation : God requite it you, for you have honoured his memory. As for the Communications, I think it better I should speak of them when we meet, which will not be long, I hope.

Now for Auguste, he has been with Bennigsen because keeping with that General meant getting under fire ; while with the Marshal a young man who is a novice in

arms could not stay without shame. That is the Marshal's complaint, I suppose, for they have had no other bones to pick. Overlook my brother-in-law's lack of manners, and you will find his heart in the right place and his head, too, and *I recommend him to you*, a thing I should never do lightly. Do not be different towards him, that would be cruel: if he is in the way at headquarters, speak to him, he will gladly go to several of your generals, but let that be done in good friendship I beg of you! As for the Duke, I say nothing. I have dwelt on that subject long enough. He has aged ten years: Germany and you are the cause still more than the death of his son. A thing I shall never understand is why you do not understand each other, or, more rightly, why you do not understand him: send for him, for pity's sake, and when you have spoken to him and thought it over, perhaps you will thank me. I am extremely impatient to see you again: to-morrow I am off whither you like, and ready to go as far as you like, provided I can see you, you, George's idol. Farewell, friend, I embrace you with all my heart.

LX.

ST. PETERSBURG,
March 7th.

Count Rostopchin being off to the field, and his father having begged me to give him a letter to you, dear friend, I do so, and commend him to you as his father's son and late A.D.C. to George: otherwise I do not know him at all. As I write direct, I only embrace you with all my heart.

LXI.

SCHKLOFF,

March 16th.

I cannot help, dear friend, giving you news of myself, for I care too much about being in touch with you, and your not getting unused to me. My journey is much favoured by the weather, the roads even are fairly good. The country, on the other hand, from Surach to here, is pitiful to see : everywhere traces of destruction, it would be a cruel spectacle for you. I have spent twenty-four hours here, and look to pass two days at Kiev : I cannot picture to you how impatient I am to see you, there is more than one feeling in my soul for you. It is the fashion to make me speak of my health, so I will tell you my attacks still go on, though the air suits me, only it is as yet too cold. Perhaps I shall have the happiness of seeing you, embracing you not long after these lines reach you. My dear friend, do not forget me, and be sure that no one, aye, no one wishes you more good than I.

LXII.

CHETCHERSK,

March 19th.

I received day before yesterday yours of the 1st, dear, with the enclosed from my Aunt. If you had opened it you would only have found the utterance of her gratitude to you and devotion to the good cause. It is dated a year back, *March, 1812*. I have been here since last evening, and must spend a day to give the little one a rest. Even after Mohilev the enemy's devastations become less visible : there was only a small

body here. The mistress of the place calls herself ill and absent : the fact is she has not gone out for four years, sleeping in the day and staying up at night. With icons all about her, she sees no one but her man of business and some ladies she entertains. My health is as before, yesterday I had a fainting-fit. As you have been good enough to let me have Aunt's letter, be pleased, dear, to let her have my answer. In a month, maybe, I shall see you, which will be a great pleasure to me. Be happy, dear, and don't forget me. I have avoided all names in the enclosure, so it can very well go by post.

LXIII.

RADZIVILOV,
April 1st.

To-morrow morning I leave Russia, dear friend, and cannot forgo the pleasure of giving you news of myself. My journey has been very pleasant, here particularly, in Volhynia and the Kiev Government. I was loaded with civilities : they are two splendid provinces. I found here an Austrian *Cynbernial Rath* (Provincial Councillor), who was told off to get ready horses and quarters for me, to ask me if I desired military and civil honours, and if I wanted to see the sights. I declined the first, though to no purpose, abruptly refused the second, and accepted the last. They tell me, and 'tis the same man, that a General is sent by the Emperor of Austria to pay the respects ; * I shall fall back as far as I can on my incognito to be rid of this tiresome person, but I thought I ought to report it all to you, as in no way concerns my humble person. In a dozen or fifteen days

* It's General Simburne, and I have just seen him.

I shall be at Prague. Farewell, friend, I embrace you with all my heart, and make many prayers for you. Governor Comburley* takes charge of this. I can only praise him exceedingly, as well as the rest.

69.

TEPLITZ,
April 16th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

At the moment of getting into my carriage again, after passing half a day here, I learn your arrival at Prague. The hope of seeing you again causes me a sensation that cannot be described. If all still goes well, as I trust in God it may, I hope to come back to Teplitz more than once. Dresden is only 7 miles off, and I await the moment of our reunion with an impatience like to the feeling I have for you. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

LXIV.

PRAGUE,
April 28th.

I send you this express, friend, to tell you that I reached here yesterday, and await with much impatience your behests when and where I can see you. I will be off at once to go where you please, and have no scruples on that head, for to me, a vagabond for six weeks past, what are a few leagues more? From Brody to here I have been loaded with attentions and civilities

* Michael Comburley, Governor of Volhynia from 1806 to 1816.

of all kinds, despite my entreaties to maintain my incognito and let me off all ceremonies. The orders of the Emperor were so positive here to render me the same honours as to him, that the troops turned out to receive me, and there was a great crowd. But the most interesting thing was that all these people, including the soldiers, for all their full dress, took to crying "*Vivat,*" and "*Vivat; Alexander!*" From the peasant upwards, through all the classes to Archduke Ferdinand, whom I saw at Brunn, where he commands, they all shout at me and my people, without I or they having touched any string which might give them cause, that Emperor Alexander is the saviour of Europe, and if their Emperor bade them march in behalf of the French, generals and officers would resign, and the private men desert, and it is the last good chance for the House of Austria to resume its pristine splendour; and had their Sovereign ten daughters married in France, he must not dare do otherwise. The generals declare they dare not, on the very rank and file's account, not pay me the honours, because the latter know I am sister to the Emperor of Russia. Make of this what suits you: it is my duty to let you know public opinion, which is already growing outcry. You will understand without my telling you we make no reply or beat a retreat. Sometimes even these ventings of disapproval of the wit of the Government become awkward. The country is splendid, but the lack of money appalling: doubtless the details are known to you. The Emperor and Empress show me incredible civilities: I stick in my corner as much as possible. The King and royal family of Saxony arrived here yesterday, as also the Gd. Duke of Wurzburg, but have not yet communicated with me. I remain calm. The Elector of Cassel and his brother, the Landgrave, having asked to see me, I shall receive them this evening.

As for my health, it is as before, and I assure you I care little. Do not forget me, and rest assured of my unbounded devotion. Kindly see about the enclosed.

LXV.

PRAGUE,
April 24th.

I have this instant received your letter jointly with Marie, dear friend, and am coming to thank you for it. Thanks to Heaven that you are well, and our arms have been victorious. I was expecting Brunner as I wrote you, to proceed whither you might bid me, for I feared the crush of people there must be at Teplitz, but I am off there to-morrow, and shall stay there. By the evening I shall be there, and wait with extreme impatience to see you. If there was an adoration it was that which George bore you, and I assure you that if 'twere possible that feeling added to my devotion to you. Farewell, dear, I embrace you heart and soul.

LXVI.

TEPLITZ,
April 26th.

I reached here yesterday evening, friend, and hasten to let you know it, hoping I shall enjoy happiness after my long journey. I found Marie exactly the same, and you fancy if we were delighted at meeting again. I have had a letter from the Empress of Austria, which I should have sent you if it had not been so long and so

honeyed. As for me, Her Majesty is very clever to adore a person she does not know. And here is your section word for word, "Pray remember me to H.M. the Emperor, and repeat to him the expression of the most lively interest and tender friendship on the part of my dear consort." I answered, I should not fail to perform the commission. Politenesses of all kinds to me go on, and speeches, but of declaring in our favour the authorities, *e.g.* the Great Burgrave, do not speak aloud, though all have that wish on their lips. Here is a letter for August, whom I trust you will take care of. I cannot tell you what I feel at the thought of seeing you again. Keep well, be happy, and love me always, if only for the sake of him who is no more.

Is not Brunner still with you? Send him back to me if you have no use for him.

At the moment I was going to seal this letter, news come to the effect that the French head-quarters are at Dresden, and yours at Bautzen. Count Ugart, who is with me (I have General Koller still, as well), is leaving with Jordan for Peterswalde, in order to take the needful precautions to be warned in time if a French detachment came from this quarter, and I am on the alert to be off any instant: if it should be necessary, he will be given *in like case* orders to make such arrangements as need be for our wounded and sick. I have only sheer praise for the zeal I meet with. I shall stay here as long as maybe, waiting for your ultimate decisions and beg you to send back Jordan and Brunner at the earliest. I embrace you with my whole heart.

After *the speeches* no ill-success will dishearten, and I hope the same for you.

LXVII.

PRAGUE,
May 10th.

Count Stadion having offered to take this letter, kind friend, I cannot refrain from telling you I reached here to-day, the object of my stay at Teplitz, which was to see you, having come to nothing. Marie is here likewise. I await your orders, and offer a thousand prayers for you. Impossible to learn anything definite. My rule is in that case to count on Divine goodness and have no opinion, when I have so few data to confirm it.

I have to repeat to you especially to-day that the civilities and attentions only increase. If I had the power, I am not so foolish as to take a jot of it to myself, but render to Cæsar what is his. Be good enough to take charge of the enclosed. Farewell, kind friend, my health is far from improving, but let not that distress you, and if you can let me go and see you at some place I shall be very pleased. I embrace you with all my heart.

70.

BAUTZEN,
April 30th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I seize the first free moment to say these few words to you. Count Wittgenstein, out of prudence, has thought right to re-cross the Elbe: for my part, I think it a mistake, and that the morrow of the battle we should have attacked, for the enemy was in rout, according to his own officers. You did very rightly, dear, to fall back to Prague: I was going to send off an express to beg you to do so, when Jordan arrived. What crushes

me is that this again postpones the moment when I shall be able to hold you in my arms. Otherwise we are full of hope in God and eagerness to come to grips with the enemy. For any sake, dear, do not use such expressions as "Love me, if only for the sake of him who is no more." That pierces my heart every time. Ah! as if you do not know to what extent I love you, both for yourself and him. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

Embrace Marie for me : show her my letter, I have not a moment to write : they wake me three times even in the night. But all that does not detract from my humour, which is in the best frame possible. Yours, both of you, heart and soul, for life.

LXVIII.

PRAGUE,
May 2nd.

The desire to thank you for your letter by Jordan forces me to take advantage of this Austrian express, dear friend, at the risk of doing wrong. No one can be more alive to or grateful for all your friendship than I am : my life was dedicated to George and you, so now take you the whole share. The opinions here on your retrograde novement differ. The Austrians approve of it, and would not blame it if it was to the Oder, saying they would then have the advantage of taking the enemy in rear. The Germans again find fault, and set down to it the change in the Saxon system and very great disheartening, thanks to victims and those compromised for having declared themselves. In a word, those of the "Reich" (Empire), have not yet the desired con-

fidence in our support and success. For myself, as before, the public I admire, but in your eyes I own to having no opinion, having too few data to judge of the matter. Here folks talk of nothing but longing to fight and share in your exploits. I don't know if that will like you, but 'twould oblige me if you said a word to Stadion on the extreme civilities they show me. They tell me it is feasible for me to get to Libverda, which is a mineral bath near the Saxon frontier, or even to Friedland to see you : if that suits you, I can even wait there some days. At the beginning of June, as here reckoned, I shall go, I think, to Carlsbad and Eger, if events do not prevent me : my attacks are more constant than ever. I am very delighted that the battalion behaved well and pleased you : they promised me they would, like good fellows.

Marie sends a thousand greetings : we beg you to send these packets to Mother, and the one to Count Tolstoy. Farewell, my kind and dear friend, etc.

LXIX.

PRAGUE,
May 19th.

I received yesterday evening a letter from Auguste, which posts me in your orders, dear : I thank you for thinking of me in respect of news and wanting to see me : it is my most ardent prayer. People keep on putting about here the most favourable accounts, and Stadion exerts himself to give such, and the attentions to me go *crescendo*, so much so that I am quite astonished and confounded. I try to live much more among things than men, and I have seen some very interesting, which I will tell you of if ever you have the

time. There has come here a Mme. Geul Warnsdorff, formerly wife of Voroneschi, who claims the title of prince for her children. Pray do not read her letter, for it is not worth your while, and as old documents have to be hunted up, she will have to go to Petersburg. Never in my life would I have taken charge of it if the dame had not been advised by the Emperor of Austria to come here, in order that through me her petition may get through, rather a stupid one: she wants to do you the homage of putting her son in your service. Such as got it I pass it on to you, much vexed at the signature. Let us get on to the second. The Landgrave, Frederic of Hesse Cassel, who is here, not knowing to whom to apply, begged me to let you know his desire that his younger son George, who is in the Danish Service, may pass into yours, and, if it may be, about your person somewhere, as a cadet to begin with, to get used to the language and the service. He is a young man of 19 or 20, and his brother is in the Brandenburg Hussars. If you agree, kindly let me have an answer. Thirdly, you have forgotten what you were pleased to promise me for George's A.D.C.'s, for I gather there was nothing as to promotions for those you have attached to yourself in the orders of the day. Fourthly, here is a paper on a request of young Murane's of the Works, asking me to let him transfer to my battalion. I think it my duty to tell you that the treasure of H. Saxon M. were despatched from here to Dresden yesterday by way of Teplitz: the Cossacks might make a good job of it. Here they are indignant against those who let them go, rightly declaring it's a present to Napoleon. Marie gives me a thousand greetings for you, friend. I have stuck in a letter of young St. Priest to his brother, and embrace you, etc.

LXX.

May 8th.

Despite the little desire I have to pester you, I think it my duty, dear, to inform you of a talk I had this morning, and which was preceded by another not less strange. The Austrian gentlemen who are about me told me the great Burgrave had received orders from his Court to keep me posted in the news, and that he asked a private audience of me. It is the first I have had with him, but I did not think I could refuse it, since he asked for it. He came then and told me all that has to do with the mission of Bubna, and the proposals he conveyed, adding that they all regretted and had made plain to the Emperor the harm caused by his being away owing to the delay of orders. I had no information nor gave him an answer. He went on, "I can assure you that at Vienna they are firmly determined to side with Russia, even should she lose one or two battles, for it is with that chance taken as a basis that the resolve was made. They fear only one thing, that the Emperor of Russia, in such a calamitous case, should change his plan and determination. I replied, "To my thinking doubts as to the firmness of the Emperor are no longer to be entertained: he has declared he is striving, not for his private quarrel alone, but also separately for that of Europe, for all States must combine to shake off the French yoke, which if borne by one of the neighbouring States, cannot fail to be felt by the others. If you look for material proofs, see the reinforcements just come to us, others we still await, the legions that are forming. That is acting prudently, and seeing beforehand to replace losses one might suffer. If you look for spiritual, Moscow, the ancient capital, the dearest of our possessions, was occupied, as also several of our provinces, but did

that shake the Emperor's firmness? No, sir! He is convinced that to persevere is the only way to compass the end and enable the world to enjoy due tranquillity." "If we are assured of that, count also on that of our Emperor," he rejoined. "We have the finest part to play, we have only to go forward on the spot and 'tis the Beresina over again, and should you have fallen further back and the French gone more forward, we should only have an easier game in putting ourselves on their communications. Win a battle, it will be a blessing, but it will only be more trouble for us to take the enemy in rear. It is unpardonable not to realise the faults we commit, but the trouble is the Emperor's vacillating: he is still consulting people very little worthy to give opinions. They have sent M. de Bubna, he is back, he will be sent back again: time is being wasted, and we are spending such sums for nothing!" "What is this to and fro, monsieur, is there anyone who causes it? There's no sign of the rein which should sway the whole." "Why, *that's because there is none such!* Our state is desperate, and if we have such a peace as since 1809, in two years we shall no longer exist! For our salvation we ought to wage this war. Let us march into Saxony, and deal it a decisive blow: the Tyrol is always ours, and we shall soon have Italy. All that ought to have been done six weeks since."

You see the line of demarcation in the speech, the official and the private, but as he talks they all talk, and much worse still! I think I may warrant you I am extremely cautious; you can ask themselves if I am not. Do not fancy the great Burgrave is a hot-headed and violent man, far from it. Here is his portrait: as tall as Wardenburg, good manners, very quiet, very well-bred in his ways, vastly sensible, and moderate, bearing an excellent name in all respects, and I would have war-

ranted him much to your liking. By disposition he is a little backward in making acquaintance, but seems to have gained confidence in me, as they all do, and I shall tell you some fine stories when we meet. The great Burgrave has talked to me of the persuasion of Count Metternich. He says that at bottom he was never French, however, that is a matter apart. Marie knows Stackelberg and Tonly by sight : she said he is frightened and irresolute ; not beloved at Vienna, and not apt to wake up paralytics, for at least they suffer from lethargy. You have sent General Scharnhorst, I know, but he is a Prussian : this is a moot point which does not concern me, and comes in here only by accident. You can have seen from my style, in my letters by Austrian couriers, that I feared publicity : this one risks the same fate, although I have tried to seal it hermetically, but little does it matter to me. Forgive its length : I owed you, I consider, this account. Yours, heart and soul.

P.S.—Do you wish for proofs of it ? The account published at Vienna of the battle and the retrograde movement were most alarming, yet, nevertheless, the resolve of our Court has been taken.

71.

LABUAN,
May 10th.

DEAR CATHERINE,

Receive my most hearty congratulations on this day.* How it pains me not to come and embrace you in person ! I send Volkonsky to carry you these lines : he will give you and Marie a faithful version of the two glorious days we have passed through. Wholly yours. A thousand greetings to Marie.

* The Grand Duchess's birthday.

LXXI.

PRAGUE,

May 26th.

After my old fashion, I think I am doing my duty in warning you of what I believe is for your good. In the first place the battle near Bautzen redounds to your personal glory, for people see that you might have gone forward instead of back, and that if you did not so it was out of sacrifice of self and your personal fame, for all those who think right say that if you were on the Oder, that would only be the better for the purpose, for they might with so much the more surety carry out the famous plan of the *Beresina* so fondly admired here. You see, then, the inclination to put a good face on things: there are, surely, some feeble ones there, and even the moving spirit is the most frail creature which might be frightened thereat, and you do not humour these and that enough. Here are the proofs of what I put forward. Yesterday the Burgrave, who wishes me well it would seem, asked to see me to speak of good news he had had from Dresden, as if you had come back after a success at Bautzen. But that was merely accessory, he wanted to speak of something else. M. de Montesquieu, not the one we saw at Petersburg, had just passed through on his way to Vienna, and giving out piled up wonders on the score of the battle, which they called a great victory. Every day he passes two or three French couriers bound for Vienna. First, he passed one for Constantinople, others went to Munich, from which we learn the battle has made great stir. You see they mince nothing, and, as they send with despatches military men who talk much and with some knowledge, it is to be feared they may make proselytes. That is what the great Burgrave came to speak to me about, com-

plaining not a soul had been sent from our head-quarters. He says very sensibly that Stadion was only a diplomatist, that they read him all the despatches the other sent to Vienna, but that it could not be they alone would counteract the effect of the French boastings. He added he ardently wished you would adopt a little of the same method, and send some one here who can give details and speak with certainty and knowledge of the matter : I found the advice so excellent that I think I ought to tell you of it, though I did not do the semblance of it to him. He told me one thing, however, which requires looking into, namely, that by their advice few reinforcements reached the French. He added, "If the Russian Army can keep the field two months more, rest assured that Napoleon is beaten so as never to recover, even if no great battle is won against him. His army is going to rack, and his means are exhausted. We have already more than three thousand deserters *by tale*, among whom they are enough Frenchmen properly so-called even, without counting those that roam about our woods and mountains, where they commit excesses." I beg your pardon, friend, for telling you things you perhaps know already, but forgive me for my good intention. I embrace you a thousand and a thousand times, being yours, heart and soul.

72.

TANER,
May 14th.

DEAR SWEET FRIENDS,

Volkonsky not having been able to leave Libau owing to an inquiry I got him to make, and having yesterday myself had so much to do that I could not

send him off, I further trust him with these lines for you both. We are all in the best mood and spirits possible. The deeds of the 7th, 8th and 9th have covered our brave fellows with glory. On the 7th, General Barclay thoroughly defeated Lauriston at Königswart: they took 4 generals, 1,500 prisoners, and 7 guns. On the 8th and 9th successively we had two pitched battles in position. The enemy vainly endeavoured to dislodge us, he was every time thrown back, and it was only by trying to outflank our right, and so forcing us to extend, that he profited by a moment when Blucher had weakened himself to support our right, and forced him, by overwhelming numbers, to withdraw from the heights. Our left, meanwhile, had put the French right to flight. However, Wittgenstein thought it safer to order a retreat. I was of the contrary opinion, and I think still that by supporting the advance of our left the enemy would have been defeated. Well, the retreat was made calmly and with admirable steadiness and order. I own I could not have thought such things could be except on a manœuvring ground. Not a gun, not a wheel fell into the enemy's power, while we took one gun of him. The enemy's loss must be enormous, ours amounts to less than 10,000 men. There are no praises that these gallant troops do not deserve. Not a battalion was in confusion, and that during two days of the most terrible and stubborn fighting, even three for the troops engaged under Barclay. In fact, you must have seen it to have a notion of it. As soon as the Austrians are to the fore we resume the offensive: meanwhile, we shall try and gain time. Farewell, dear friends, it hurts me so to be so near to you yet not be able to come and clasp you in my arms. I embrace with all my heart the little ones. Tell me if they have made acquaintance and get on well together.

Bartolomeï is long since in uniform, and acting as A.D.C., the younger Obolensky* is in uniform, too, and the elder,† about to mount it. He has only just arrived, as the formal orders of the day are made out at Petersburg, since the War Office is there, hence the delay. For the rest, let us take war as such. Yours, etc. . . .

LXXII.

PRAGUE,
May 29th.

How thank you sufficiently, dear, for having thought of me on the occasion of my birthday, at a moment when the destinies of the universe are in your hands. That is like you, that is all I can say, and I feel as I ought the value of your affection. One of my letters has been roaming about since the 8th. Its contents were interesting, the Great Burgrave's orderly was all but taken, but got away, and I learn, to my great regret, that my letter is roaming the world. The second was to go on the 14th, but fear kept the Burgrave from despatching it. They say a Russian express from Stackelberg has been taken. The valour of our troops, and the good order you mention, are quite to be admired, but what most delights me is that the "retire" was not by your order : I have already told you what they think of it here. The frame of mind is excellent, the harm is not in the members but the head, and they loudly accuse their Emperor. Often I tell myself I am wrong in speaking so to you of things which are not in my province. It is old habit, which necessity, however, should certainly

* Prince Alexander Obolensky (V., p. 101).

† Prince Basil Obolensky (V., p. 122).

make me give up by now. There are two leading Austrian officers who have retired, and wish to enter our service. They asked me to send them as posts, but I refused, saying if they wished to go of themselves, I would not decline to give them letters to carry, but it did not suit me to give orders to an Austrian subject. I begin to lose hope of seeing you, at least just now. You talk of the Austrians as having declared, but here that is by no means publicly acknowledged. There is talk of ten or fifteen days more, but military men are mighty impatient. I was for going to Carlsbad, but I think I do better to wait, for here I am near to the news, and there I risk having none, and be obliged to go elsewhere by circumstances. As for my health, it is no better; it's all the same for that matter. The children, whom you are good enough to ask after, are well, and mine is frantically tender with the little girl, who only looks at him from the summit of her greatness. Alexander would be embracing and caressing her all day, but Marie gets angry and does not respond. Farewell, dear, God keeps for you, I doubt not, the right reward, but I wish also He should keep for you that of this world, seeing your splendid efforts prosper. Do not forget me, and believe in my unbounded devotion.

Napoleon was at Dresden on the 14th inst.; there are fourteen wounded generals there. Duroc is dead, and the dearth of victuals as well as the lack of care of the wounded extreme: this is very certain.

The Great Burgrave, having looked in on me this moment, read me a despatch from M. de Bubna, who tells him there are sixteen thousand wounded at Dresden, *two thousand* being officers; Genl. St. Gruet and two others are killed, three wounded, beside Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr by a fall from his horse. Up to yesterday, the 28th, no reinforcements had gone by for the

French army, but a thousand infantry and 700 cavalry. The Burgrave estimates the French force at 106 thousand men, 70 of them French. Schwarzenberg comes to-night.

LXXIII.

PRAGUE,
May 29th.

I cannot let Major *Herbert* go without giving him some lines for you, friend. He is an officer who must have done prime service and has good certificates. General Koller, who is about me, and in whose opinion I place confidence, assures me that he has, beside testimonials, a letter of eulogy from his Colonel, which is the best of testimonies, for he would never sign a word for which he could not answer. I do not recommend him, not knowing him, but an officer of desert seems to me desirable, and my General is not one who talks in the air. Yours, heart and soul ; do not forget me.

73.

PETERSWALDAU,
May 28th.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

You will know by now that Austria, not being able to be quite ready by the appointed date, to wit June 1st, wanted that we should conclude an armistice to gain some weeks without being forced to give battle or fall back to avoid it. However, much to my regret, I have had to agree to this. That is good only in one respect, that it gives me the hope of seeing you, dear

friends : you can well be sure what pleasure that gives me. I cannot, however, go too far away from the Army, and the Emperor of Austria has been gallant enough to offer me the Castle of Opoezna in which to receive you. It is near Königgrätz, and your General will doubtless know the way. I am sorry, dears, that will compel you to traverse the roads for me, but one cannot get everything in this world, and the need I have of seeing you is too great for me not to count on your indulgence. Let me know approximately when you can be at Opoezna. I await the moment to press you to my heart with an eagerness I cannot express. Wholly yours for life.

74.

PETERSWALDAU,

June 2nd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Just as I was going to bed I got your delightful letter by Brunner. To tell you what passes in me at the hope of meeting you is what I cannot. Stadion exacted from me my word previous'y to warning him some days beforehand. I made no difficulty of giving it to him, believing assuredly that between the getting of my letter by Rugnot, your departure from Prague, and your arrival above all at Opoezna, at least four days will go by. But I see to my great pleasure that I have real soldier's sisters, and their preparations to be off are as soon made as those of a lieutenant of Hussars. If, then, I had not been bound by my word, I should have been punctual at the meeting to-morrow, but, thanks to that, I am forced in spite of myself to put off my ride by a day. So I am leaving here after to-morrow, Wednesday, June 16th, at break of day, so that by dinner I may well

be at the meeting-place. I find your proposed plan excellent, and thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. I only suggest to you in place of Nachod, by preference Neustadt, or such other place between there and Opoezna you may think suitable, and for this reason : I know through Stadion that Austrian officials will receive me at the frontier, I fancy he himself and Lebzeltern with their following. Nachod being almost on the frontier, we shall not escape spiteful criticisms there, whereas at Neustadt there will be nobody, and I shall go ahead, leaving all that stuff at Nachod. So, dear friend, in this way we are more likely to attain our object : that of being at our ease at first go-off. There is another head more rational still I care about : I know they have tried to save you every possible kind of shock to the nerves. Pray do not cause me the extreme pain of having again set your health wrong, it being so far from good. On my part, I promise you to be careful, but do you, for the love of God, take all needful precautions. You will cause me cruel pain if anything happens to you. As you are a woman of wit, I appeal straight to you on this score instead of writing on it to those about you, feeling sure you are too reasonable not to realise the justice of what I say. For God's sake, no rashness, and don't presume too much on your strength. Farewell, dear, I don't know what I would not give for the first while to be already past, for, to be frank, I dread it. May God be your help and support ! Yours, heart and soul, for life. I embrace Marie a thousand times.

75.

PETERSWALDAU,

June 18th.

DEAR FRIEND,

The stay at Opetschna did me real good. It was very long since I had enjoyed such a time. It was only too short, but let us hope that before going back to Russia I shall be able again to enjoy a like happiness. A thousand thanks for your letter by de Preradovich. Here is the book I spoke of, all the marks in ink or stars are mine. Properly speaking, it only after the second part of the work that I marked in pencil what pleased me. Wholly yours, &c. . . . Do not forget me, and assure yourself it is impossible to love you more than I do.

76.

PETERSWALDAU,

June 22nd.

I seize the leaving of the Duke, who spent some days with us, dear, to write you these lines. I was very glad to see my uncle again, and much delighted with his conversation: our ideas on Germany get very near each other. Farewell, dear, think a little of your brother, who loves you with all his heart.

Embrace dear Marie for me.

77.

PETERSWALDAU,

July 20th.

I am much touched, dear, at all the pains you have been at for *the common cause*. It seems to me these pains have had their effect, for every day folks grow more warlike, and I have the best hope that things will go as they should. I cannot thank you enough for all you have already done. I regret you have said nothing to me as yet about Metternich, and what is needed to have him wholly ours : I have the necessary funds, so do not be chary. I give you back the 1,700 ducats, and authorize you to pursue those tactics, the safest of all, wherever needful. It is Bartolomei who carries you both letter and ducats.

I regret greatly all you have told me about your health. What effect had the waters of Eger ? The armistice ends the 10th n.s., and the 10th hostilities will begin. So manage matters so as to leave Eger in time. Probably you will pass through Prague, and I have some gleam of hope of seeing you, since, if the Austrians side with us, as I hope, part of our army will enter Bohemia, and I with it. Hence it is from the 12th to the 14th that I hope to see you, and need not tell you the impatience with which I wait for the moment to clasp you in my arms. Prince Paul harasses me enough, for the objection you made against him is exactly what bothers me regarding him. It is the Duke who acts as my envoy with him : we hope to succeed in getting him to go to England. Farewell, dear, yours, &c. . . . You say nothing as to Aunt's coming. The thing for the Pastor is going to be done. A thousand embraces.

78.

PETERSWALDAU,
August 8th.

Some hours since, dear, I received your letter from Flangbrunn of August 4th, and, as you wish, at once send back the bearer. Last evening, as I went to bed, I got yours of the 15th and 17th. Do you know that I should be justified in being angry? Is it right, is it reasonable in you to put such meanings on my silence, and are we on a footing to stand on ceremony? As soon as I can I write to you: if I do not write it is certainly because I cannot or have nothing interesting to communicate. What do such phrases mean as "*not knowing if my letters are not unpleasing*," then "*a rilence that I did not think I had deserved, and putting myself out about it, seeing your character*"? And, meanwhile, every time you have the proof that it is not my character that has been at fault, but always you who have accused or suspected me falsely. Should I not rather have the right to find some fault, not with your character, but your head, which is so often agog?

Now, after having preached to you a bit, I will tell you, dear, that I love you none the less madly, though you are a little mad yourself sometimes. I reach Prague the 15th August, for an interview with the Emperor, to which he himself has invited me. So leave Eger on getting this, travel cosily, and get somewhere near Prague, in some country house. As for me, I remain some days at Prague, so it is impossible you should miss me. You realise that at my coming there will be no more French in Prague, so perhaps you can occupy your house, but begin by getting somewhere near about, and there we will talk. Tell Marie to do the same. As between the getting of this letter and my coming very

few days will elapse, I put off talking of the contents of your letter until we meet, and await that moment with an eagerness I cannot tell you of. Meanwhile, counting on your friendship for me, I announce the birth of a son, whom I beg you to take some interest in. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

79.

RATIBORSCHITZ, .

August 14th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I have this instant received your kind letter of the 13th, and at once send back the courier with my ultimatum. You did very well in coming to Prague as soon as the Emperor asked you. You must not come to meet me, because there will be awkwardness with the Emperor as to places in the carriages to come back. You must not go to the bottom of the stairs, for no Princess of Germany does it for anyone: if you receive me at the top of them you will have done the *ne plus ultra* of the custom in such a case. I cannot tell you the happiness I experience at the idea of seeing you again. Embrace Marie a thousand times. Wholly yours for life. Thank General Koller very heartily from me, for all the care and *good offices* I owe him: I *am* touched by them beyond all saying, and will never forget him.

80.

TEPLITZ,

October 5th.

A thousand thanks, dear kind friend, for your kind letters, which give me each time a pleasure I cannot express to you. But for the love of Heaven and all the friendship which unites us, do not take offence in answering you, and do not be guilty of injustice of gauging my devotion to you by the number of letters I write. But, upon my honour, I can do no otherwise : I lead a dog's life, and can scarcely cope with the terrible press of work on my hands.

I have nothing against your journey, except the trip through Bavaria, which seems to me as yet before the time : as for Prague, I see no great harm in your staying there. Thanks to God all goes well with us, and if, contrary to all expectations, anything disastrous should intervene, there would always be time to warn us. Your cipher is very good, and I see you are to have a place in the Foreign Office : I shall use it every time I write to you by no very sure hand. Put yourself at the feet of the Empress, and tell how much I am touched by her having been pleased to remember me sometimes. It is a pity you told her she would not suit me.

The story of Archduke Ferdinand has been watched in the same way here, and I greatly disapprove of it. Tell Archduke Charles that I regret every day not seeing him at the head of our armies : I have tried more than once to bring this about, but always in vain. Farewell, dear, for life wholly yours, etc.

81.

CARLSRUHE,
December 5th.

As soon as I learned they had sent you an invitation from here, dear, I quite thought that would cause you some trouble, but the fact is it is a polite usage in the S. of Germany and which binds to nothing. I think, therefore, you have no need to alter anything in your plans, the more so that I may be so placed as to leave here from one moment to another. I only wait for *what Metternich will say to me*: you remember the phrase. Farewell, dear, I am waiting impatiently for Schaffhausen. Think of a friend who loves you heart and soul, and is wholly yours for life.

I kiss the hands of the Aunt of all aunts.

82.

FEEBURG,
December 15th.

How touched I am, dear, by all the friendship you evince to me on every occasion! You know, too well, the warmth of mine for me to have occasion to speak of it to you, and I had rather deeds proved it to you than words. I am near you in my thoughts, and this juncture weighs on me beyond any telling. Resignation and humility before God, that is what I cannot enjoin on you often enough. Pray do not leave Schaffhausen without my seeing you. I am bound to stay ten days longer at Feeburg: at this moment I have still too much work on my hands to be able to come and see you, but I shall be with you without fail some days hence.

Meanwhile I am as doleful as may be. Metternich has behaved abominably in the Swiss question and I am outrageous at it. He compromised himself, his Imperial Master, and me to boot : and I told him so, too, and anyone who cared to hear as well, for I cannot be indifferent to my reputation, and this behaviour towards Switzerland sullies it. I will tell you all that in detail. If you find yourself talking to Swiss people, say loudly that I am totally against all violation of their territory and neutrality, and still more against any kind of change in their home affairs. Farewell, dear sweet friend, etc.

LXXV.

Christmas Day.

The day that for our blessing,
 God deigned below to wander ;
 A second Saviour's pressing,
 'Tis Emperor Alexander.

1814.

LXXIV.

STUTTGART,

January 4th.

I reached here two days since, and leave again this morning. The King was much alive to the friendly mission you had given me with him, dear friend : his kindnesses to me have been lasting, but his confidence has increased, and yesterday he had a talk with me, for

which I think I ought to account to you. In the first place, I must tell you he is very pleased with and favours every way Count Golovkin, who seems to me to act very prudently and tactfully. The King said he counts firmly on his good offices regarding him, and that he has in this respect no fears save such as are due to the withdrawal of Russia, and with it all effectual protection as soon as quiet is restored in Europe. On the other hand, he is greatly alarmed and highly indignant over the Austrian Cabinet making a distinction between the Emperor himself and his ministers, Stadion and Metternich, who have private grudges against him, their property lying in his States which he has confiscated. If you listen to both parties, H.M. is quite in the wrong, according to Metaller, for he has plundered these gentlemen, taking from them their kin and napery—things which are used quite brazenly at court. Cloths with the Stadion arms are on the table, and in the cowsheds they show the Metternich and Stadion heifers, and so on. He fears lest Bavaria and Austria should wish to deprive him of his possessions, and never sees the indemnities which might accrue to him, and yet has a high opinion of himself, rating himself as the bulwark of Germany and the true Austrian antidote to the too great preponderance of Bavaria. The particulars he gives of the action of the Austrian Cabinet, and which must be known to you, are frightful, but I felt bound to point out that for the good of his States he must not give way to his anger, that Austria was his natural prop, and that out of policy he should do everything in the world to conciliate it, so as always to have a stay and the only one possible. He felt that was so, and told me I was right, promising to hold himself in : that very evening Vacquant, who had not yet shown up, was invited to the family circle, which greatly astonished

folks. The King is indignant, and has adduced me many proofs of the arbitrary governing of M. de Stein, who claims to order him like the Prince of Lippe. He told me he has irrefragable proofs that Stein was a leader of the *Tugenbund*. I much regret not having managed to see them, or get on that score anything but the repeated protestations of the King that he was certainly in it. After having rendered you a comprehensive account of what may interest you on this general head, I am going to add a particular episode. Speaking of his wife's brothers, the King told me the Duke of Clarence was the most unpleasant of the whole family, and he knows them personally, that he had lived at least twenty years with an actress, a Mrs. Gordon (Jordan), by whom he had five or six children, and whom he had lately put away.

We talked much, Aunt and I. She is very alive to your friendship, and writes to you on the accusation you make against her. If it's "rubbish" to you, it's not so to her, who takes the pains to listen to me. As I have told you, if I could devote my life to you I should be content, but how can that be, and what can I do more prudent than espouse a man whose character likes me? * There will be in other ways what Providence wills. My health is feeling Schaffhausen, I am not well, and the result of Frankfort in this respect is done away with: the happy days passed together were only too short to heal me of the crushing weight that I bore to the law during three weeks: I speak of it to you to ease my conscience. Tell Michand to write often. Farewell, dear: God bless and keep you! Despite the deep vexation I feel at not having fallen in with your view in the last conversation at Schaffhausen, and the rigorous weighing of the matter I performed, I find I ought to

* The Prince Royal of Württemberg, her future husband.

remain silent, and that I have not the right to betray confidence. My object in apprising myself cannot be doubtful: to help you, that is my constant aim. I have not the right to abuse the trust of anyone. I embrace and love you with all my heart.

83.

LANGRES,

January 29th.

A thousand thanks, dear, for your letter from Schaffhausen. I am truly in despair at your having thought so much about one thing which was not worth it, for, take the assurance, it will never be I who can misjudge you. Here we are half-way between Basle and Paris, and right in the middle of the France we so dreaded. Instead, it is a France that receives us with open arms and calls us friends.

Hope and entirely trust in God, 'tis He that will decide all. I send you Menetikov, he being told off to inspect some companies of Artillery lying at Cassel, I commission him to visit you and carry this letter. A thousand messages to the Duke from me. I spoke to Lord Castle-reagh about your journey, and wrote for them to send you a *quidam*.

Let me know precisely when you expect to be at Amsterdam. Farewell, dear, impossible to love you more tenderly than I do. Heart and soul, yours for life.

LXXV.

HANOVER,

January 17th.

I have to give you an account of my stay at Cassel and here, dear, and all the compliments the Electoral family bade me convey to you. They have been most polite and agreeable to me. I tried to do your errand as best I might, and the Elector as well as the Electoral Prince assured me the last troops would march in the course of the week. Without taking on me to pronounce on their activity, I owe it to justice to say that in six weeks to arm, equip, and train 12,000 men in a country wholly stripped of resources, and where the sovereign is quite a stranger, seems to me a great feat. The new town is very regular, the old is like all the towns in Germany. The castle having been partly burnt and the rest laid waste, no one lives there : on the whole, the house is not yet ready. Weissenstein is fine, but not to compare to our Peterhof : there is an old castle in the Gothic style which is pretty as it can be.

In the name of justice, I must plead with you for the Prince of Hesse, who has lost a leg, and is really in a very painful position in all respects. The Elector makes him an allowance of 3,000 crowns, and with the pay he gets as major-general, that is all he has, not drawing even the allowance of 2,000 roubles of all Princes in the service of Russia. He is wishful to be active, but his state and scanty knowledge of the language make him but little apt for it. See what you can do for him.

On leaving Cassel, I went and spent a day and a half at Gottingen, one of the most curious stays I have made as yet. The library and the collections belonging to the University are very fine, but the most interesting is that of the notabilities I saw and the speeches I heard.

Except in Germany, a scholar is of consequence only in respect of his science : here, on the contrary, he is the weather-glass of public opinion. *Our country*, that is every third word, and what all these heads ponder is how to create and organise Germany. But, at the same time, the summing up of all discussions is the *necessity* for a constitution ; a system of *representative government after the manner of the English*. I listened and fell back on your good intentions and sagacity : you may remember that during the latter part of Germany's existence, almost all the Princes had abolished the States. As it is everyone calls out for them, and that on my plan, in accordance with our talk during the drive on the right bank of the Rhine, with regard to an individual back from England. I have seen the famous Charles Villers, translator of Kant, and whom, without transgressing Christian charity, I accuse of being a false brother, judging by the speeches and invectives beyond measure he poured out to me on the French, and which are, they say, in perfect contrast with his past conduct ; Sazronius, professor of statistics and a man of wit ; Sturm, professor of History ; and Blumenbach, the same of Natural History. All these gentlemen are learned men, famous by their writings, with the analysis of which you have no concern. The only one really *for you* is Professor Eichhorn, a famous Orientalist, a pious old man of a sweet and beneficent purity. He would suit you, and, as I have sought after him much, I have won his good graces, which secured me a harvest for you, which I will tell you about if ever I have the happiness to see you again, a time that I wait for with furious impatience, and that I beg you not to postpone, disregarding distance, place, or roads. The province of Hanover is noticeable for the air of prosperity that reigns there ; all the barriers of the bridges on the road are of iron,

and so forth. The town is ugly, there is a large public garden called Herrenhausen, which is very fine. The most extraordinary thing to my eyes is to see English troops, and various customs of the country. The Duke of Cambridge received me very well, and is giving me a great dinner at four: my savage way is shying at it beforehand. He is big, stout enough, and strikingly like all the guineas I have seen, his father, therefore, paler (too pale) than his brother, whom we know: he is well mannered, talks much, very quick, and very loud. *Perfect; but not the man for me!* Of Russians, there are some artillerymen here, and Mme. Bennigsen, who will be a fresh acquaintance for me to make. To-morrow I am off to reach Oldenburg in two days, from which I will write to you at once. Before concluding, I must inform you of an interesting circumstance. It is curious to see the enormous number of trucks loaded with English goods which come from Bremen, and the delight they afford the inhabitants. Travelling has a great drawback; it is the lull in news of those we care about. I do not know where you are or how you are faring: three weeks will soon be by since I have seen you, the limit you fixed for momentous decisions. God bless and keep you, dear, you must know no one loves you more than I.

LXXVI.

OLDENBURG,

February 2nd.

I have been here since last evening, dear friend: you will be able to conceive the grief I experience in this place I have so often heard spoken of, and which George so longed to see again: to set foot in the house where he

saw the light wrung my heart, besides, the dwelling is in such a state that it hurts one to see it. The Duke is always the same to me, and always perfect : I paid your respects to him, but have not yet given him the letter, the question not having certainly been timely yet. The town is rather pretty. I am in quite a little tradesman's house, very clean, and, seeing the size of the palaces here, all my attendants, even Duiss, are in separate houses. Bremen would suit you, I think : it is a thickly peopled traders' town, where there are charming houses and ladies. I found there Ct. Stroganoff,* and several Russian regiments ; amongst other friends, my postilions from Tver, whom I know, and it was a great pleasure to see again : they forced me to hire them, and the remarkable coincidence came about that I entered the land of Oldenburg with Tver drivers, one notably, who had been in my household.

I owe it to truth to extol Hanover. As I wrote before dinner, I had not seen the people, who are of the nicest. The Duke gave a fairly big dinner for me, and a party to which the whole town was invited. He presented men and women to me, and it must be said that he is a past-master of the art of doing the honours of his house. I found the women delightful, and some very interesting men to listen to. Of the places I know in Germany it is the one, as regards people, which has suited me best, though the place is hideous. The more I see this Germany the more sure I become of the justness of the principle adopted by Empress Catherine, of governor-general with very extensive power, but not absolute, like that of the petty princes. They had the faculty of putting life into portions of the Empire, and, with a touch of honour, what man is there who will not take all pains to make flourish what is in a sense his property ? In Ger-

* Count Paul Stroganoff (Obt. 1817)

many we see little towns, but harbouring the same objects, the same resources, that with us only the chief towns have in good condition, because each prince, good or bad, was yet interested in fostering what belonged to him. They should have been left that salutary power, yet had their legs tied enough to prevent their running at pleasure in the spheres where their independence militated against their nationality. This is a long digression, which I beg you to pardon me in *virtue of my ancient rights*. *Memento Catherine*, that means, make me get well without heeding distances and the like. Here, they know nothing as to the army, it's abominable. I have learned several things *bearing on our last talk at Schaffhausen*. Wardenburg carries the lines to you: I was fated to find the man here again. Well, God's Will be done in spite of us, who are but blind! At Bremen I had a very fine English guard, there are two delightful regiments there, nothing seemed stranger to me than to hear the words of command given in English. Among the bandsmen there are Scotch mountaineers without breeches, rather a singular garb: I had one in my room. My brother-in-law bids me lay him at your feet. Farewell, dear friend, keep well, and go on loving her who cherishes you with all her heart.

LXXVII.

OLDENBURG,

February 17th.

The lack of opportunity to make a letter reach you keeps me from at once answering yours, which Prince Menchikov delivered me: I waited from one moment to

another his return, having begged him to pass this way, but, as he is not come yet, I send this at all hazards to the Prince of Prussia, at Frankfort, who will get it to you as he can. It is necessary to be as thoroughly kind as you, dear, to think of me in the midst of the great doings of which you alone are the centre or, so to speak, the health-giving breath. Here is my line of march. March 5th n.s., I reach Amsterdam : I am purposing to write to Count Lieven to find me quarters in London, etc. May I be so happy as to see you in England ! *Hope and trust in God*, as you have it. It is reserved for you, as apostle of the Truth, to bring back to the strict limits of Christianity a baulked and glowing soul, I venture to say, without thereby marring the gratitude I owe to Providence for the manifold benefits I have received from it, in its most virtuous aspirings. Since I saw you at Schaffhausen, I have thought it over more than once, and given over *from choice*, not impossibility of the opposite, my fate to God. The feeling that prompts me is that of the purest desire to grow morally perfect, and make me worthy of what was mine, as also of your affections : as for the sweets of life, it will be as pleases Heaven. The Duke and I have letters all in readiness, but which cannot be trusted to chance. We are agreed on the necessity for me personally and *enough* on individuality, but he has the same views as you on many subjects. I am very grateful for the English *quidam* they talk of sending : my grey mentor is leaving me in a few days. I make a holiday of the journey, but assure you that the hope of seeing you again has a large share in it. That is why I beg you, for all arrangements already made, that is if you want me, to let no consideration stop you. I find the Duke well in health, but much busied with the affairs of Germany and Vienna in particular, which I again take the liberty of commending to

you : the French pillaged it finely. Oldenburg is a pretty little town enough. Once brilliant in order and cleanliness. Now that is only a memory. I lead there the same life as at Schaffhausen almost. Apart from the Brunn affair we almost totally devoid of news. God preserve and bless you, dear. None loves or cherishes you more than she, etc. . . . The Duke and Auguste are at your feet.

LXXVIII.

February 26th.

I have to ask your pardon, dear friend, for having got Menchikov to promise to come back this way : it was that I might have a certain opportunity of writing to you. I am dying to give you an account of my conversations with the Duke concerning my affair. I began recounting all the aspirants who came forward, ending up with the Archduke.* (he had taken it such a thing could not fail, and questioned me first day on it), telling him I had advice to ask of him, as much personal, out of the affection I bore him, as in respect of his grandsons, and that I was determined to undertake nothing not to his liking. Having set forth their object, he was as much affected, telling me that when his own daughter was married they felt regret about it from being sure that it weakened the ties of affection between father and child, and that all the more would it be so between us. I made no answer on the principle that in such a case words go for nothing, and consistent conduct brings back errors engendered by a susceptibility which is only fancied. He went on to what my fate was to be : I mentioned my day-dream, the Low Countries. He was

* The Archduke Charles of Austria.

moved and changed countenance, "How happy I shall be to have you for neighbour," and several times he came back to that. From all I have seen and heard the Archduke solution would smooth many difficulties. Remember, I prophesied it to you, he is too prudent to trust promises, and wise to count on castles in Spain. The *ideal* in the house seems to him possible in the world, though rare, a fine institution tending to the well-being of the race. You know my sincerity too well to think I fancy I have a right to anything whatever of that kind, or the Archduke to any separate status: No, our claims do not go that far. As to age, he does not think like, he does not find it at all too much. As to health, he has heard, like you, talk of the cause of bygone ailments. His view of the public character is very favourable, having the usual errors on the private, saying, however, that he never took enough interest in the person to ascertain the truth, apart from his public doings, and being fair enough to consider that all that is personal can only be judged of by me, he being able to talk in the air, never having seen him. I have no part in the answer the Duke gave you: he consulted me as to what he should say, and asked to be allowed to be silent. You see I kept my word, subjecting each head coldly to discussion without letting myself decide in the least, but where I won by my arguments a complete victory is the necessity I am in for *my happiness* of marrying again and the painfulness of my return to Russia. He proposed to me buying some slice of land abroad to get me away from a region which oppresses me without the least compensation. It was a feint literally enough: I only quote it as a proof of your error, without wishing thereby to do him harm in your mind as to the delicacy which would make him desire to see you agree to all; no, age has its rights. He speaks to you of me on the score of

our relations in the family : an assurance on your part that I can be some good to you or a marked desire to help me would make me bear without weighing the sacrifice of my inclinations, I venture to assure you, but it is only for you that I should do it, for my father-in-law (out of fondness for me) knows that he cannot have me one way or the other. Thus he dwells heavily on my fate, and is not quite clear in his ideas on that of my children as to the security of their fortune in Russia. On this head I assured him it was as safely secured as anything in a country where the laws are not backed by a constitution, and if I took my sons away for some years from the country where they belonged by birth and prospects it was to be looked on as a bringing up abroad and not an expatriation. The Duke's view of the other matches agrees with mine, he looks on them as moral sin, and offering no personal set-off, except with the Prince of Prussia, whose kingdom is the only advantage. In summing up all I have heard, the outcome is rather a fanning of my desire than a repugnance. The mere time alarms, like every hasty resolve, a man so methodical as the Duke : I never dreamed of fixing it, all the less when my father-in-law has still to be made accustomed to an idea which at bottom cannot delight him, yet reason gives him no right to reprove, so I left him in suspense. Events and also Providence will decide the matter, and your further answer will settle my conclusions as to following up the matter between the Archduke and me with regard to Mother.

Forgive the length of this letter (I feel thoroughly the weariness that I know I am to you : at 26 it would seem one should have ceased to trouble others with oneself, but it seems it is not my lot). I hope you got my letter sent to the Prince of Prussia at Frankfort. I shall be off, unforeseen hindrances apart, still, on March 1st.

The ignorance obtaining here, thanks to the remote position, of all news is very painful. Perhaps you are at Paris : wherever it may be, God bless and keep you. I embrace and love you with all my heart : do not forget and let me know if you still adhere to your plan of going to England. At Vienna they are already making ready to receive you : remember I know no obstacle when it is a question of seeing you, so no talk of conscience ! Yours, heart and soul.

LXXIX.

ROTTERDAM,

March 6th.

Not having wished to pester you too often with my letters, I have waited till I had been to the Hague to report to you what I saw in this country, and remind you of a sister who holds you very tenderly. I have not seen England, but, apart from it, I think Holland is the country that would please you the most, being the triumph of intelligence and human industry. A broken bridge gave me the opportunity of seeing the inside of the earthworks, and the astounding labour that this filching from the sea costs. I passed along the dykes, where large carriages do not go as a rule. Industry is carried to the highest point, everything is kept trim, and you would think you were passing through a garden. If you wish to train good mayors (burgermeisters) and heads of police, you must send them to Holland. Petersburg is dirty compared with Almeloo, a little town, but one that enchanted me. Nothing so pretty as the villages, the towns : you can use the fronts as a looking-glass, and go into the streets in dancing shoes. The

houses outside are very monotonous, and offer no architectural study, their good side is their cleanness. Knowing your taste, I prophesy you will enjoy in this respect the trimness and care you will find in everything : the fine avenues and walks, the regular gardens that one of the old stock love so, are things you constantly see here : country houses at every step, smart with fine railings of iron. In short, friend, what Alissof of Tver so often went under arrest for is the order of the day here, and I promise myself in my future home Dutch maid-servants. The canals are splendid. Amsterdam, the first commercial town properly I have seen, is one of the finest sites that can be. The Hague is more similar to what we know, and strikes by the great void : the population of this pretty town has diminished very much by the mishaps of the day when all capitals have been winnowed. They complain here, as everywhere, of the French yoke : the stagnation of trade, naturally, made a people suffer whose soul it is. The nation loves as little the great Power and the protector, as all those who came under his beneficent wings. It seems to have a good ply and good spirit, but, as a neighbour, it still dreads some irruption of that Vesuvius. Everybody is much busied with the new constitution which is to be promulgated at the end of the month : it will be as near the old state of things as may be, and modelled partly on the English. The Provincial States will continue, and there will be States General which will meet every year, and when the Prince summons them. The Sovereign Prince has too little power, they say : he must himself have missed the moment when, without being absolute, he should have been master, whereas at present he is trammelled : the right of peace or war is his, however. I have not yet perused the constitution, what I here say of it is hearsay from different

people. They fear the revival of the old party-spirit, each province and even the towns having had their special privileges. I find the Prince all right, and am much astonished he is not better known in the world. You saw him at Breslau, so I cut short his description. The Hereditary Prince is charming, they say a thousand good things of him, and he looks quite like it, I warrant he would please you : he is perfect without and within. The mother is the king of Prussia in female garb, quite kind and altogether simple. Generally, that is the seal of a house not yet equipped as a Court for want of a habitation, but where folks are cosy and *middle-class*. The Prince's mother had much wit, and a fine presence : she was perfect to me, as were they all. If I am not mistaken, you would greatly like this place : bear in mind I did not predict the same thing for you about Vienna.

I have not had time to make very close acquaintances, but, as far as I can judge, there are very well bred and informed people. They have a great fondness for science and study, especially all that bears on Natural History. In this kind, and national and Spanish pictures, I have seen splendid things : nothing to my mind more elevates the mind God-wards than looking into all that touches His works. Perhaps you have never thought of such an object from such a point ? The variety of birds and shells is so huge that you remain dazed with admiration at the Maker of these wonders, and permeated with the sense of your nothingness.

Peter I., in choosing Holland as the model for a regenerate Russia, gave fresh proof of his vast genius. Not to be compared with Germany, it is the country from which we can draw the most good inventions suitable to our surroundings and the genius of our people. To send young people here to study both

hydraulic matters and internal methods as to draining and the like, would be very useful. I think you will be struck, as I was, on seeing this country, with the benefit we might draw from it, and that our ancestor felt so greatly at Saardam. I saw the little case of his great genius, it is a pretty spot, populous, and given to trade, but the place above all for you and "Master" Arakchiév, is the village of Brook. The peasants there have houses so delightful that I would fain pass my life there : pray from me commend him a journey in the good season through Holland. In winter I would counsel it to no one, for it is horribly cold in the houses. You would be enthusiastic, dear, and the more so that the folks seem to be highly amiable. But for that matter, when one has a brother whose arms God has blessed from Moscow to Paris, you find goodwill everywhere, each one being beholden to him. They bear you in this country the feeling I love : gratitude and trust. I was very well received, I have only praise for all ; to escort me, I have a chamberlain, Baron d'Ablaing, who is a very well-read man. If my version of Holland is so little akin to those in vogue, do not be astonished, and don't put it down only to my spectacles, no ! The defect of the country is that everything, even science, is only dealt with in the vernacular, a little known tongue, so that in default of translators the fine things remain buried. As I have already said, as for Natural History, I have not seen such interesting specimens, or people who have so much love of knowledge coupled with much modesty. One more thing for you, it is the merchants' houses : I have been into many to see the pictures and the like, and came away astonished, and not less at the charming women you meet there, and who receive you with such delightful kindness. Think of me if you come here, and let them leave you some liberty.

At this moment Holland seems like an English colony : the marriage* with the Princess Charlotte, and the subsidies of all kinds that country affords being to their delight, anglomania is the order of the day. Without doubt, the alliance is extremely advantageous to Holland, but not less so to England, for it is a splendid province, and a firm footing on the mainland. The budget this year of the country is ten millions of ducats, outside the upkeep of the dykes, which every private person must see to, there being no general board for that purpose. It is a large sum, exhausted as they are, the taxes are very high and the capital, for lack of trade, not large. They much want you to name some creature or other to renew relations with the Power, the more so your Allies have done so. I found at the Hague the Duke of Clarence. For the nonce, lad, if you see him for an hour you will not speak of him to me again. He is a *guinea*, too, as to face, but less well than his brother, a sheer, raw sailor, who says things to make you die of laughter, and many clumsy sayings, though not lacking in wit for that. Although at a decent *distance* he sniffed round the pot : I made believe not to understand, and confounded him, I believe, by my natural way. His ideas are Hanover, which, as you know, is a male fief : he overwhelms me with politenesses, and wants to arrange my taking ship, and will follow me at once to England. I amuse myself with it, hence do not fear the burning of Troy : his will only be a straw-fire, the creature is as unpleasing as can be. Lieven writes to me that the Prince Regent, though not warned of my early coming, send me a frigate and a cutter, but he says not to know my desire for some one, for no one has

* Of the Hereditary Prince of Orange-Nassau. As we know, this marriage never came about and the future King of Holland married Grand Duchess Anne Pavlovna.

appeared yet. For that matter, he expressed himself most graciously regarding me, and his brother sings me a tune which upsets me. He talks of you, too, and has given me the finest messages in the world. To see you in London would please me more than aught else : may I have that happiness ! I fear you may have troubles, according to the rumours current. M. Hernich is at his games, a born rascal !

The Empress of Austria bids me carry you a quantity of compliments, and that very insistently. I am further saddled with a request, it would be a good thing if you could grant it. A M. de Capelle, brother of your General Thoil, is prisoner of war in Paris : if he is released, his relatives would be very glad you should let him come back here, the *if* is the greatest obstacle : however, as God wills ! You want, I fancy, to tell me you wish God would make me be silent : I have done, making you my apologies for this long epistle, and informing you I expect to take ship to-morrow. Do not forget me, do not lose touch with your whilom friend, who embraces you and loves you with all her heart.

Herewith a letter from M. de Laharpe, forwarded from Switzerland. I congratulate you on the bliss you enjoy, having it beside you. Pray tell her of my desire to make close acquaintance with her.

I saw, at the Hague, Aunt's nephew, the Hereditary Prince of Nassau, whom you wanted to make me marry perforce, despite his wife. He is a pretty young man, though he might be my son for age and face.

LXXX.

ROTTERDAM,
March 25th.

I at last announce my leaving, dear and trusty friend. Despite the shouts of resistance, I am off to-morrow, having on board with me the High Admiral of England, the Duke of Clarence, who as such and from respect for the Emperor of Russia, whose sister I have the honour to be, has orders from the Regent (so he says) to escort me and be answerable for my person. I said "No," and that I would wait; alas! for a week past I have been sighing for an accursed cutter which was to touch here for my suite, and on which I wanted to put myself to avoid H.R.H. No, she will never come, and instead, there are at my disposal, beside the frigate, two transports. So here I am, obliged to profit by this extreme attention which well proves the proverb that all excess is harmful. I inform you of this mishap, and am sure the world through you will deduce a thousand things. As for me, I am furious, and yet obliged to thank them, such is the way of the things of this world: appearance is often far from the truth! Lieven asked me if I wanted to maintain my incognito, I said "Yes," if he had no good reasons to give against it. I prefer it for the avoiding of ceremony. I do not know as yet what he has decided for me. The little that I know of the doings of the great world proves to me that *the handsome Suitor* is still at his tricks, which will, I think, blacken more and more the raiment of innocence in your eyes. God keep you and grant you happiness! For myself I ask no more, and submit myself to the Creator with full confidence. This only I know for certain, that I shall not become Mrs. Clarence. I embrace and cherish you with all my heart.

LXXXI.

LONDON,

*April 1st.**

Here I am since four yesterday afternoon, in this famous city, and my first act is to speak to my best friend, whom I cherish beyond all. By my last from Rotterdam you have seen that, for all my resisting, I had to set sail on board the "Jason" frigate, with the Duke of Clarence, who has been and is distressingly polite, looking after the smallest details of the journey. He is crushing, so much trouble does he take. The crossing was very pleasant, Captain King being no end obliging: I don't know if it is too much to ask you to say a decent word to the English over it. The Duke begged me to make his respects to you. I was sea-sick, but my attack did not come, which is strange enough, and the first time for a year. The wind having kept me from going up to Grevesend (*sic*), I landed at Scheerness (*sic*), where a part of your fleet lies. I was received with full royal honours in face of my protestations: they seem to be bent on pleasing the Emperor of Russia, and the feeling they have for him comes from the heart, no calculation in it! You know that is felt better than expressed, and I am infinitely delighted to see even the common people speak of the Emperor of Russia with due enthusiasm. Lieven came to fetch me, as also his wife, at Scheerness, and told me of the kind terms in which you were pleased to commend me to him. My thanks for them, dear, all delicate attentions hail from you. I am only very vexed to have defied your orders without meaning it, in crossing in an English vessel: I can hear nothing of ours. Lieven will explain the rest to you. The Prince Regent sent his coaches, horses, and

* See p. 225, extract from Mme. Lieven's Memoirs.

escorts of cavalry for me to each halting-place, for all the Countess Romanov's protests. Moreover, he put beside me one of his favourites, General Turner, who is verging on fifty, and looks very stern. The cargo-boat with my belongings not having as yet put in, I have not been able, as I was asked, to go and make my curtesy to them. If it comes, it will be to-day, and this morning the Regent will wait on me : so I shall write you the description of them all by the first post. The country delights me, it is one long garden, the dwellings have an easy, trim and pleasant look, which charms the eyesight, and what one sees in the prints is not exaggerated but rather perfectly to the life.

London does not strike me, except Westminster Bridge, which is splendid. I have a furnished mansion, the finest in town, where we are very well lodged. I cannot say anything to you in your sort, unless that the air of well-being would strike you in all and as to all, as also certain forms of convenience in the houses, of which we have no notion : it is not at all "easy lying for who comes from far," and the fact outdoes the expectation. I found the Lievens just exactly what I had left them. The husband seems very well thought of, he tells me they wish to treat me well, so as to show their respect for *you*, even the Opposition. I beat a retreat as much as may be, claiming the permission to see everything that is interesting and live as quietly as possible, I think much of you, as is right, and pray that the ill-affected may not hamper you. My health is as before, and the attack has come back in the old way. Farewell. dear, I embrace you . . . and beg you not to forget me.

LXXXII.

LONDON,

April 4th.

Do not read me except at your fullest leisure, friend, for it is only a limning of this place that my letter will contain. I will begin it, however, with the two points which you may most have at heart. The public and public opinion regard you in this country, and value you in a manner which would wreak you the sweetest delights. Often in the street I hear folks say, "Let me see the sister of Emperor Alexander, the deliverer of the world." They understand you here, and whether Fate prosper you or not, the nation knows how to part you from successes, and ascribe to you the most lofty motive. Ay, it is doing no wrong to any to say that it is in England you are most esteemed: do not reject this, look on it as the just requital of your toils, and not an earthly vanity. As for me, I owe to you the most flattering reception, and that not as the Emperor of Russia, but as Alexander, the man whom I adore, and in whom I put my glory at all times. The second head worthy your head is Mme. Moreau. I had my imagination awakened in her favour: well now! she outdid my expectation: a most interesting face, with the stamp of the utmost disaster, pretty, pleasing, sprightly, simple in manners, and nice as possible, one of the most distinguished women I have seen. She bade me lay her at your feet, paying you the just tribute of gratitude that she owes you. Her little one is delightful, you would take pleasure in seeing them; as for me, they took me by storm altogether. Her health being delicate owing to her chest, I induced her to wait till you got back to Russia before proceeding there, for she would be very lonely at present, and she is too shy to make

acquaintances quickly. There was a rumour her daughter would become maid of honour : she did not mention it to me, but I know it reached her, and that she was flattered by it as a stay for her daughter : if you can do it, she deserves all consideration. Now that I am coming to describing the Royal Family and what I see, I must, as a preliminary, tell you that nothing is more deceptive than the picture they commonly give of England : without claiming greater accuracy, I am going to depict you the most salient points of error. London, which is called an ugly city, is quite the reverse. The streets are broad and straight, not many great mansions it is true, but also no gaps, and no startling contrasts in the buildings. An astonishing stir of industry and trade : the City, a part of the town which the polite world does not live in at all, is that which I prefer, for the throng of people, and which is of all kinds, which throng the streets any week-a-day as with us those are crowded where the 1st of May procession goes by. The Regent, handsome as he is, is a man visibly used up by dissipation, and disgusting rather. His reputed Lovelace airs are a make-up of affectations which the haunting of bad company makes him often exchange for those of a vile libertine. His much boasted affability is the most licentious, I may even say obscene, strain I ever listened to, you know I am far from being Puritanical or prudish, but I vow to you that with him and his brothers I have often had not only to get stiffly on my stiffs, but not to know what to do with my eyes and ears. A brazen way of looking where eyes should never go, that one must be made I know not how to stand. Marie* would die here. The Regent sang wonders to me of you, and gave me a thousand fine messages for you. Nothing so frivolous as he ! He becomes ecstatic over your

* The Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna, Duchess of Weimar.

ribands, over diamonds, his fine plate, his good cook, like a child or an upstart. I swear to you I am not severe, nor do I exaggerate, all this is much short of the fact, and I do my best to prove it you by facts. The Queen, though accounted bitter, was delightful to me; the Princesses Elizabeth and Mary, who pass for statues, are far from such, the latter particularly would hold her own anywhere. The public, a byword for coldness, is, thanks to you, so demonstrative that it is I that have to draw back. Princess Charlotte, whom I have purposely kept to the last as most interesting, and generally regarded as a child, is far from being so. She is a little shorter than I, too big made, especially about the hips, fair, fresh, appetising as need be, fine arms, pretty feet, great, intelligent eyes of pale blue, though with at times the fixed look of the House of Brunswick, fair-haired, a good nose, delightful mouth and good teeth, some slight marks of small-pox, scarcely to be seen, much wit and doggedness in her nature, seeming to have a will of bronze in the least things, a searching reasoning power, and manners so odd that they take your breath away; no exaggeration, I vow to you. She goes up to each man, young or old no matter, or more properly the latter have the preference, and takes his hand which she shakes with all her might, and she seems to have a good deal of it. In walking, she takes bounds or strides, so that you don't know which way to look, her clothes cling to her and don't come down to the calf, so that at every movement they threaten to let the knee be seen. She looks like a boy, or rather, a young rascal dressed as a girl. I swear to you I am within the truth, far from exceeding it. She is seductive, and it is a crime to have let her acquire such ways. Her great desire is to have the riband of St. Catherine, do not think for that she is lacking in wit, no, it is vanity. You would flatter her most greatly.

I have not written to Mother about it, preferring to tell you first : she talks of it to whoso will listen.

They are calling me. Farewell, I embrace you, and love you with all my heart.

LXXXIII.

LONDON,
April 8th.

How I congratulate you, dear and kind friend, on the manifest protection that Heaven has granted you in the taking of Paris, and the victory that went before it, in which you faced the greatest perils. The imagination can hardly take to the idea that the Russians are at Paris, but yet it is a just requital of Providence for your faith, your perseverance and the ills and vexations you have undergone. Perhaps you are the first instance of a Prince who has at heart only the well-being of humanity, who is fettered in his aims that have no worldly ambition. I know what you have suffered, but I am enjoying, and I would you could do so in my place, the well-founded enthusiasm you evoke in this country. I learned the news at Princess Charlotte's : on getting home, I found a representative of the minister with the details to hand ; the first word he uttered was a eulogy of you. Next day I paid a visit to the Bank, the people had flocked together in a countless crowd and began to huzzay and clap hands, all that for Emperor Alexander. To be your sister is the best passport here, everyone smiles on you. Since the fourth no news. I reckon later on the memory of Michand* and Arakchiév, the master. Poor Mme. Moreau is in despair at

* A.D.C. General Michand de Beauretour.

the death of Rapatel,* who was a friend of twenty years' standing. Her health is very delicate; I saw her yesterday. She bade me lay her at your feet. Yesterday, for the first time, I went to mass, I wanted to thank God in His temple for having kept watch over you. It hurt me cruelly to long hear George's name, but anyhow it was duty. I must report to you on Clarence: twice he has been to Gagarin to confide in him his aims and desires. The latter showed him out the first time as politely as possible, saying it was not his business; at the second, he told him I did not think of marrying, and advised him to give up the idea. I trust, then, that I am free: I am as cold to him as I can be, for his assiduity overwhelms me. To speak to you of more interesting things, I will tell you I saw the armoury at the Tower, which is magnificent. There are quite 100,000 muskets in one room alone: in seven years Great Britain has sent five millions of them to the Continent. I also saw the Bank, and, thanks to the honour of belonging to you and to the taking of Paris, details about it which none but the directors will ever get a sight of. They showed me the machine for making their notes, which is infinitely simple and ingenious, and their strong-room, the most striking thing in the world. They are great chambers filled literally with bars of gold and silver, and bags of coin: beside that, they say there is still more in the cellars. Yet in circulation you see no more coin, for fear of its being sent abroad. In a general way it is astonishing to see the vast amount of silver in all the smiths' shops, and there are few streets where there are not tens of them. Dearth and luxury are at their utmost; it is alarming what fortune it needs to live in this country. Curious as it is to see and study for a while, I should not be tempted to live there; selfishness being such a prevailing quality

* A.D.C. to Moreau.



Catherine Paulowna
Grand Duchess of all the Russias.

of its denizens. Moreover, their ignorance of all that is not they and their colonies is incredible, they think the Continent wholly given up to barbarism, it would seem. I had to go through a great dinner at Lord Liverpool's, where I saw the flower of English ladies, but was not greatly impressed by them, especially after those of Vienna: their dress is unbelievable. I have been to the doctor whom Creighton recommended me; like a true Englishman, he wants to make me swallow a decoction of silver: he tells me strange things about my poor health, it all bores me. Here is a long epistle, to which I only add the prayer not to read it if you have not much leisure. They are waiting for you in England. I am eager you should come, and beg you, if such is your intention, to still inform me of the moment. That alone could change my notions of going back to Bohemia at the end of June. Farewell, friend, you know of old-time the inviolable devotion I bear you, and with which I am wholly yours.

LXXXIV.

LONDON,
April 11th.

Yet another letter from me! Receive my good wishes, friend, on the great news of Napoleon's abdication. The mind has hard work to grasp it, and never, surely, was there a more sudden change from the most awful and bloody war to most perfect peace. The joy here is like madness, and your name is blessed, as it deserves to be; the town is to be lit up three days, I will have my own if I see you arrive in this city, and ask orders of you beforehand. Probably you will land

at Dover; may I come there very nimbly to meet you, or do you bid me wait for you in full state, which, however, would be no hardship, I own? If they put you up in the Castle, and you accept, we shall be separated, and you but ill at your ease: if you prefer liberty, I offer you my house, where I will not treat you as ill as at Schaffhausen. You and yours will do very well there, and so shall I; anyhow, the plan offers a thousand advantages. Mme. Moreau has spoken to me of her concerns: you will remember that when the General entered your service, I fancy her property was sequestered. By a delicacy well worthy of her she does not mean to ask the Bourbons to remove it, since, she says, her husband did not serve them. So she asks it of you, and begs you to say a word on the head to the provisional Government. Believing with reason that every reparation of honour is due to the General, she thinks to send one of the Senators, her private friend, a petition in letter form setting forth the real intentions of her husband in serving against his fellow-citizens. I think she will ask for it to be printed. The more you know of her the firmer she will charm you: never did I see a more pleasing woman. To change the subject, Lieven is writing to you on talks he has had with the Regent and the Duke of Clarence: I will add nothing but that you would be fully of my mind if you saw H.R.H.: he haunts me, I send you a caricature of him. I have paid a visit to the docks, which are magnificent concerns. Fancy a bit the richness of this country, the value of the works public undertaken by private firms, without the slightest aid from the Government, amounts this year to 30 *million pounds sterling*. The scale on which everything is measured is huge, and when you see England you can well fancy where all the metallic treasures of that poor Continent have taken up their abode. Farewell, friend,

to love you more than I do is not possible, keep a little fondness for me, and believe wholly yours for life.

Lieven tells his letter is not of a kind to go otherwise than by messenger, so I send you this merely on account of the wishes of Mme. Moreau, relying on the Count's missive when it arrives.

LXXXV.

LONDON,
April 15th.

I send you herewith the two letters of Mme. Moreau's, which my last spoke of: she asked me to let you get them open. Forgive my writing so often, friend, I find it a great enjoyment. Pray let me know by Michand or some other if you still hold to the plan of coming here: in case you should not be able, I beg you to name me a place where I can see you, for if I miss this chance we shall probably be parted for a long while. I will wait for you if you are for coming to this country: otherwise I beg you to give the order enabling me to have a Russian vessel to cross from Dover to Calais, and proceed to Bohemia. There is a petition from a multitude which they have charged me to pass on to you, which I do with much pleasure, to wit, honouring the public by having yourself painted by Gerard at Paris. Really you ought to, for you are, after all, a being whose face folks want to have before their eyes, like that of a good angel. Be good, only one, which will be copied and satisfy everybody. Farewell, best of brothers, keep well and love always a little your friend of old days.

84.

PARIS,
April 20th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I have received all your kind letters, and I cannot cease repeating to you what good your affection does me and the tender interest you take in what affects me. May the Supreme Being be blest a thousand times for all the numberless benefits it has pleased Him to pour upon us! That surpasses the most excessive calculations. At last the great aim is achieved, and Napoleon no longer tyrannizes over Europe and France. He is already on the way to his Isle of Elba, with Shuvalov and Koller escorting him. Pardon such a long silence, but really it was physical lack of time. I hope in a fortnight to hold you in my arms in London: what joy, what happiness! The mere idea is a transport. Do not come to Dover, as I shall try to be there two or three days before I make myself known, so as to have no ceremony before London. I am even explaining this to the Regent through Pozzo di Borgo, whom I am sending to London to Louis XVIII. Lay me at Mme. Moreau's feet, and tell her I am extremely eager to see her and express to her by word of mouth all the feelings I am full of for her without even having the pleasure of knowing her. I am delighted you are friendly with her. I quite hope I shall find her still in London. Tell her, too, that her brother has entered Russian service as general of brigade: in a few days he leaves for London to see his sister. To-day I have made acquaintance with her brother-in-law, the very one she wrote to me about, and I agreed with him on the steps I am to take in his favour to find him a place. I am likewise going to busy myself diligently with the Government for the restoring of Mme. Moreau's property, confiscated by Napoleon.



Queen Catherine II
after Schebanoff 1787

How touched I am by all you say to me at once so affectionate and so flattering! I should like to be able to justify it on every occasion. Farewell, dear sweet friend, I do not speak to you of the tender devotion I bear you for life, you know it long since: keep yours for me, and believe me ever wholly yours, heart and soul.

LXXXVI.

LONDON,
April 22nd.

I only write you these few lines, dear, to tell you of my delight at your coming to the country, which we are told is very near at hand. You could choose no time better than this, and you should not think I exaggerate in telling you it causes general enthusiasm. In the silence of my heart and without show, I give thanks to God for the fresh happiness He grants me. It is not to plead my own cause, but I assure you you would do better to take your quarters in my mansion, especially if your fellows, Francis and the King, come as they say. There is only one suite, and that not wholly made ready at the Castle, and we should be 1,000 leagues apart. In my house you would be very fairly lodged in ten rooms, the finest show in London, and the good chance of a Schaffhausen: you know what that means to me. Let me know when you decide, and do not think I shall put myself out, not at all, the house is very large. I went yesterday to a "Family Thought," as Constantine calls it, followed by a great drawing-room, or more exactly crush, in honour of the *King of France*. Who would have told us so a year ago? Since I have the early hope of seeing you everything gives me delight, and all is

well : my health is as usual. Farewell, friend, God keep you ! It is natural you should pay Providence the homage due to it, but allow us to thank it for having given us you, and when I speak you know it is always from the heart. I embrace you a thousand and a thousand times.

LXXXVII.

LONDON,
April 25th.

I received this afternoon your letter which General Pozzo di Borgo took charge of and handed to Peterson : it gave me extreme pleasure, friend, like all that comes from you, and if my fondness is to your liking, believe that yours is truly necessary to my well-being. I assure you I did not complain for an instant of your silence, finding it quite natural, your time being necessarily taken up, and that usefully. I reckon too much on your religion to think you could be ungrateful, and you would be if you changed towards me. Literally, I am beside myself with joy at the thought of seeing you again and embracing you, my benefactor and dearest friend. Come, my house awaits you. Pozzo tells me you mean to live in it, so it will be a second Schaffhausen. You will have many enjoyments here, because you are a serious man : whoever runs after pleasures will have less. You will have them, too, of a kind like none other, since no one has played such a lofty part as you, and that is what they value here more than all your other qualities. I was thinking to be off on my trip into the interior, but shall postpone it : perhaps I shall be happy enough to take it with . . . But let us not

forecast what Heaven will please to grant us. I have thanked it from the bottom of my heart for the bliss I hope to taste in seeing you. My Roller is a perfect choice to harangue Napoleon, he will be good to hear on his return. Nobody is more ignorant than I of events, since those that we see are only the outcome of those which few people know of. To-morrow I shall see Mme. Moreau, and delight her by all you bid me tell, and which she deserves : I have no fear in recommending her to you. Little by little I get used to England, but there needs other tastes than mine to be able to like Society here : on the other hand, nothing charms them more than the *material things* I see, and which few English even know. There are certain aspects which command respect and admiration. By an unheard of favour I ventured to visit Parliament : if I were an Englishman I should never leave there.

According to your orders I shall not stir, and only beg you not to make a mystery of the true time of your coming. Will my brothers come with you ? *Till then* ; what a delightful phrase ! Farewell ; I embrace you as I love you : no, that cannot be, for I should stifle you.

LXXXVIII.

FROGMORE,
April 26th.

By the Queen's* invitation I came here, which is her Pavlovsky, to spend three days : she is vastly good to me and really, considering her age, it is incredible what she does. The place is pretty though small. This morning, friend, I saw Mme. Moreau, and made her

* Wife of George III., mother of the Regent.

happy by reading to her the part of your letter which concerns her. She puts herself at your feet. Her purpose was to start to-morrow with her brother for Paris, but, learning your speedy arrival, she will wait for you, which is better. As far as I can judge of General Hulot* I like him. Mme. Moreau begs you to give her brother the order to take in hand the matter of the rehabilitation of General Moreau's name. With your support he will be able to speak to the Senators and Talleyrand to push on the matter, and give it a judicial character, and not the look of a favour accorded by the Bourbons, a thing she would not have for the world, as I can well understand. It is General Hulot who carries you these lines, be good enough to speak to him, seems worthy of it for the admiration he has for you. I await you with the utmost impatience, and embrace you in thought till I can do so in reality.

LXXXIX.

LONDON,

April 27th.

I came back yesterday from a six days' trip to Oxford, Birmingham, Warwick, and Worcester, and hasten to thank you for the news Michand writes me, that you have been so good as to have things written concerning M. de Capelle, the Dutchman, for whom I pleaded. Michand begs to mention to you his good fortune and deep gratitude. Never was man more content than he is to be with his King again. Hoping to see you soon. I regret the loss of my trusty correspondent, who has rendered me great services, and to whom I shall

* Brother of Mme. Moreau.

bear great gratitude. We are all eager for your coming, and although not astonished at the delays you experience. I am going to send you some stories which may foster your desire to be in this country, dear friend. The dealers have wanted to furnish a house for you at 100 thousand sterling, nothing being good enough for the deliverer of Europe. At Banbury, a little town, the inhabitants came to meet me and forcibly took out my horses, *for I was the sister of the great Emperor of Russia*. I have a present of wood for you, and to crown all, your name is every third word. The workmen owe you a new existence, whereas but lately they were starving; the merchants new riches instead of a languishing trade. All classes bless you, and all adore your *private character*. Who is the conquering monarch whose moral character could ever before be quoted as his first virtue? You must enjoy it and no one, no, no one more than you should recognise the bounties of that Providence to which you owe your noble heart. See now, it is delightful to hear what they say of you, and for all their grand eulogies they add, "Nothing is too much, it is his heart you must know." Do not scold me, I only tell you that because I am choking: you will see yourself if I exaggerate. My trip was very pleasant, and I saw some splendid things, not less in factories in the matter of machines than in private people's seats. I have the honour to report to Y.M. that his suite is ready, and I give him leave to come there. I own, dear, I am extremely eager to take you by the head and kiss you. Before I end, let me say a word as to my father-in-law. Matters in Germany are going to be put in order, bear him in mind: his case is unique, he is the only one that clung to honour and you. If you adopt for others the rule that recovery is indemnity, he has all he is entitled to; but if you want to single out those who stood firm,

he has rights before any. I put before you in writing what would be the acme of his desires, moreover, I think Malljahn must be with you. Do not forget the Duke, there is something which pricks your conscience in the matter : I will not even recall he is the father of your best friend, whose happiness you would have wrought by showing special protection to his country. You ought to know long since the inviolable affection of her who will only cease to adore you when she ceases to exist.

I commission August to take these lines to you or to let you have them, friend : he is proceeding to his Division. I have never deceived you touching him : with him the exterior mars the basis, which is really excellent. I believe no one is more his enemy than himself, for he has a gift for seeming foolish and committing follies, though he lacks neither wit nor brains ; perhaps time will obviate this or a change of state. What he achieves will be his best recommendation, but be that as it may, I claim for him your indulgence and the justice not to judge him by appearance, which always goes against him. God knows when this will reach you, but I do no more than embrace you with all my heart.

85.

PARIS,
May 22nd.

DEAR ONE,

I cannot end this day without saying a few words to you. Receive the very sincere aspirations I make for your happiness : may it be as complete as you deserve and my heart craves for you. At last I see daylight about our leaving, and can inform you definitely

that I get under way Friday, June 3rd. On Sunday, the 5th of that, I shall be at Boulogne, and perhaps the same day at Dover, and from there, during the night, at London. For heaven's sake, make them believe I shall not be in London till Tuesday, the 7th, and assure them positively it is only that day I shall land. I cannot convey to you all the bliss I feel at seeing you again, and pressing you to my heart. Farewell, dear, wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

A thousand homages to Mme. Moreau.

86.

ANTWERP,
June 29th.

You will be astonished, dear, at getting one from me so soon, but when it's Mistress Littleton (*sic*) who is kind enough to take charge of it, you can fancy one is in a great hurry to write. Judge of my happiness to-day, when, on arriving on the banks of the Scheldt and just about to cross it, I caught sight, in a carriage from which the horses were already taken, the lineaments of Mistress Littleton. I instantly sprang from my chaise and, on drawing near, was made sure that it was she. You will easily imagine what a happy meeting that was, and moreover it procured me the pleasure of spending with her and her husband the pleasantest evening possible. Verily none is more witty, more good-hearted, or pleasant-spoken than she, and I have just left her full of that feeling of admiration and pure devotion she is so well calculated to inspire. I hope, dear, your journey prospers as well as mine. I am delighted with my tour and the getting back, with the cleanliness I

left in England, and that I sight again since Ghent. Farewell, dear, keep well, and think at times of a brother who is very sincerely devoted to you. Wholly yours, etc. . . .

A thousand greetings to the kind, the charming bearer of this.

87.

BRUCHSAL,
July 12th.

I hasten, dear friend, to send you my Mother's letter, and the one she wrote me. I refrain from any comment, I have so often made to you those I thought to-night that I have nothing to add, and you know the inmost of my thought. As for the Archduke's conduct* towards Amelia,† I have always regarded it as detestable, and more than once regretted that it does not strike you more. I continue to think that the more time you gain the less haste you will make, and the better you will be placed for your inner satisfaction for the more occasion you will have to make discoveries as to yourself, and so more means of reading yourself lessons, the only goodness when one puts into them all the needful impartiality and severity.

Farewell, dear, I am off to-morrow to my home. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

* The Archduke Charles.

† Princess Armatia of Baden, the Empress Elizabeth's sister.

88.

KANNEMOIR OSTROV,
August 3rd.

A thousand thanks, dear, for your letters. It has been no good for me to keep the silence you enjoined on me on the matter of the Royal,* since the King applied direct to my Mother by special messenger : you will see all that in Mother's letters. The repugnance arises from the divorce looking as if adapted to the plan of marrying you. If the divorce had been obtained as something independent of the idea of marrying you, and they had then let some time pass and afterwards made the proposal, the thing might have succeeded. Such is the plan of action I have managed to unearth. My Mother is, above all, opposed to the idea of your marrying the Archduke Charles. Anyhow, she wants to see you at all costs. That is what I have the time to tell you, for all else I refer you to what you will find in Mother's letters. Farewell, dear, you know all the devotion I have sworn you, and the prayers I make for you. Heart and soul, wholly yours for life.

89.

LOUISBURG,
June 3rd.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

I have received your letters No. 1 and No. 2. How can I thank you enough for all the affection you show me ? It would have dropped balm on my heart if with it I had not received one from Marie, which gave me extreme pain. To be discontented when others try

* The Prince Royal of Würtemberg.

to do the best they can to serve you, seems to me so ungrateful ! Judge of it yourself : I append this letter, feeling conscience-stricken the while at taking up so much of your time, you who already never cease to lavish on me proofs of your interest.

Perhaps you will receive this while at St. Pölten with Virginia.* But should you be a moment alone with her, you will be able to express to her my complaints, for, alas ! what right have I to utter any, but my sorrow, and a sorrow more than cruel ! From what she said to Marie she is delighted to know me gone, so my painful forebodings are realised. Often I thought I must be a burden to her, that she would be delighted to be rid of me, and I was not mistaken ! You will recall that in the carriage Marie promised to tell the exact truth about my wife, as you had done : instead of that, when Virginia, who had warned her, touched that string, Marie told her she had no explanation to give. However, read her letter carefully, and tell me if I must not be harrowed by all that it contains : I have marked in pencil the parts that struck me most. There I am depicted as a species of culprit : as such that angelic Virginia at once took up the cudgels for me, and declared she had no fault to find with either my words or my actions. In fine, Marie seems to excuse herself for having received us together at her place, whereas how many times in your presence has she not offered to send for Virginia when I liked ? Why all this to do ? I understand nothing about it and never shall. Your heart, dear, will know how to understand me, and tell you all that mine endures : there is no expressing it. That which afflicts me no less cruelly is that Virginia seems to reproach herself with having encouraged my attachment, whereas she rather did all she could to turn

* *Ante*, p. 14.

me from it, at least to convince me that it was wholly indifferent to her. With what impatience I await you, dear ! A moment's conversation with you will be balm to my soul. I have seen Aunt again, she was kinder to me than ever : it is the only moment's solace I have tasted since Vienna. My obeisances to Virginia ; tell her my devotion to her is undying, that, despite all the ways it can be analysed, it is so pure, such a tribute of admiration does my heart offer to hers that it cannot be warped. Virginia knows I have never asked her anything, so why should she be angry with me ? Let her leave me my worship for her, it binds to nothing, and remains bound up with my existence. A thousand messages to my Aunt and Uncle. Tell the former I have not yet ventured to write to her, fearing she might find it too hasty on my part.

Farewell, dear, wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

P.S.—My obeisances to the Empress : convey to her how touched I am by all her invaluable kindnesses. My heart was really full at leaving her : my devotion is paid to her for ever. I had it more than once on my tongue to ask to take leave of her in private and not before all the world, but never did I venture to, fearing she should find such a claim out of the question for me. I greatly felt giving it up. Wholly yours for life.

90.

HEIDELBERG,
June 13th.

A thousand thanks, dear, for your letter from Wels, and for all the affection you display for me in it. I cannot express to you how it touches me. The news

you give me in it wounded me doubly, first because of all the alarms it must have caused Virginia, and then for its having kept you from seeing her again. Such has been the will of the All-Powerful, and we must resign ourselves to it. You reach Louisburg on the 15th. Unfortunately our press of work here is such that we have to meet every day. Hence I despair of being able to get to Louisburg, but I in nowise abandon the happiness of seeing you. Here is my plan for you. I have found for you a very pretty manor between Lintzheim and Neckargemunde, two places that lie on the main road from Heilbronn to Heidelberg, rather between *Mauer* and *Neckargemunde*. *Mauer* is the last stage towards Heidelberg. The manor is called Langenzell, and belongs to Marg. Wrede, is to the right of the high road. You will come there any day you find it convenient, and in accord with the consideration you owe at Stuttgart. Only let me know what day you expect to be there, and at what hour in the day. Aunt would be kind if she came later and paid you a visit there, for I hope you will spend at least two or three days there, during which I can come and see you. I make a regular treat of it. The conscripts arrived yesterday evening. I saw them this morning, both* are younger than ever, and wonderfully well. Lamsdorf is a little unwell and wearied. Farewell, dear, send me back my messenger with the decisions you come to. Wholly yours, etc. . . . Thousand messages to Aunt: I kiss her hands, as also those of my cousins, who are excellent young women.

* The young Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael, attended by Count Lamsdorf.

91.

LANGENZELL,
June.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am forced to change, much against my will, my plan for to-day. The Marshal's head-quarters go this very day to Mannheim, and the Emperor migrates there to-morrow. I cannot, then, do otherwise than go there to-morrow as well. That gives me no end of work, and makes it impossible for me to go to you: I therefore suggest to you to come and dine with me to-day. Then I can see you at my leisure and bid you farewell, for to-morrow, without fail, I must go and dine at Bruchsal. If you could come alone but for the Princess Aledinsky, it would be a good thing. I should have less difficulty in sending for Mme. Krüdener after dinner, and, while I am working, you can chat at your ease. Wholly yours, heart and soul. *Saturday, 8.45 A.M.*

92.

MANNHEIM,
June 26th.

DEAR SWEET FRIEND,

Bow yourself before the Almighty, His benefits are beyond all reckoning. The Prussian Army is already on the far side of Maubeuge, because no French Army is to be seen, the whole has disbanded, and most thrown away their arms. But that is not all, Napoleon has again abdicated in favour of his son, a Provisional Government is appointed, and delegates on the way to treat with us. It is General Rapp that gave us the news officially. It has been agreed to listen to nothing, to insist on the person of Napoleon in our power as a *sine quâ non*, for no one wants a second coming back, and,

meanwhile, follow up our operations without pause, it is the only good plan to pursue. These boons of Providence are immense. Here, dear, is a letter from Mother. She greatly urges you to go to Teplitz. I think she is right, but you must profit by the fine weather to do so. That is why, in your place, I should go from Langenzell straight there, for it is the right season for the waters, and particularly as all that will be very short. Thanks to the huge bounties of Providence it is better you should have filled up at your pleasure the 6 weeks you certainly cannot be with us to be afterwards free towards the date when we have finished, either to rejoin me, if that may be, or proceed to Russia, and, with the help of God, conclude your own affair. The more I have thought of it the more sure I have grown that to follow us is impossible. I append here a letter from the Royal,* who is well. The lines of Wissemburg are already in our power, and Rapp is falling back on Strasburg. Herewith also a letter from Joseph,† telling you of his betrothal. Farewell, dear, you can picture to yourself all that is passing in me. Let us more and more cling to our Saviour, and trust wholly to His Supreme Will.

Wholly yours, etc. . . .

93.

NANCY,
July 5th.

DEAR FRIEND,

I begin by informing you that a few days since the Royal has had a fine business with Rapp, whom he

* The Prince Royal of Würtemberg, future husband of the Grand Duchess.

† Archduke Joseph of Austria, Palatine of Hungary, late husband of the Grand Duchess Alexandrina.

beat, took five guns from him, and drove him to retire under the guns of Strasburg. The Royal had to remain before that place, to "hold" until relieved by Hohen-zollern's Corps, whereupon he will rejoin us. But perhaps you know these news already direct. I received a few days since, by General Neyfer, your letter from Heilbronn of June 28th. I have thought and thought again of it all ways, but I owe you the sheerest frankness, and I own to you that I cannot find means to get the thing done as long as the present conditions hold. To be sure, thank God, those conditions have taken a turn beyond our expectations, but the campaign still goes on and will till we reach Paris: the proof of what I say is the Royal's action, of which I tell you at the beginning of my letter. Afterwards you want me to persuade him, and since Heidelberg we have not seen each other, since we are marching on two different lines. It is likely even that we shall not meet before Paris. I can very well fancy that the moment when you would dearly love the thing to come about is just when we shall be at Paris, so as to keep him that way from possible falls. I am going to write to Mother to that effect, it is the only argument which will make her abandon all the other reasons she would have to urge against such a plan. For, dear, I could not decide on such a course for you without the authorisation and blessing of Mother. If you think over it you will agree with me: in matters of such grave importance you should be perfectly to rule. I cannot conceal from you either that to do the thing at Paris seems to me extremely difficult, not to say impossible. I consider we might be content if it could be brought to pass at Stuttgart on my return from Paris, which would be less impossible and more proper, but I am able to tell myself at the same time that that will not obviate the pitfalls of Paris.

In fact, dear, let us begin anyway by getting Mother to consent to its being outside Petersburg, and for the rest rely on the Almighty in all confidence. A thousand thanks for the extract from the Empress's letter, which did me *real good*. Yesterday, I got the old lady's reply to my letter, and all is as you tell me. Virginia is not yet back.

Farewell, dear, we tire ourselves out by forced marches, above all through the great heat, but everybody is quite brisk. Yours, etc. . . .

94.

VOID, *a march beyond Nancy,*
July 7th.

I received yesterday evening, dear, at Nancy, your letter of the 3rd from Weimar. Although I have but a moment, I hasten to tell you it is quite for you to follow, as to the choice of where you will go to take the waters, the notice of your physician in the first place: after that, if the kind of waters is all the same, it is only your own decision and convenience that you need consult. I announce to you the occupation of Paris by capitulation to the armies of Blucher and Wellington. Here we are then, it would seem, if it so pleases God, at the ending of our task. May He be a thousand and thousand times blessed for His innumerable bounties, and may we always claim to be solely guided by Him! Farewell, dear, a thousand messages to Marie. I have no news of the Royal: communications are very difficult, thanks to the guerillas, who prowl in the forests

of the Vosges. I send off to him your orderly with one of his A.D.C.'s, who is here, and who will try to wait on him. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

XC.

No Date.

Uncertain as to your whereabouts, friend, the gazettes declaring you have already left Paris, I profit by a King's messenger to address to you these lines, asking your pardon if they should be importunate. The King writes to me begging me urgently to let him know what you decide on the place and time of my wedding. I have been condemned to keep giving him the same answer for two months past. Your last letter on this score, dated Nancy, July 5th, showed me that having realised the reasons which made me desire this union should be consummated as *promptly as may be*, and away from Petersburg, you were willing to write to Mother: since that moment, having no more news of you, I am plunged in the most utter uncertainty. Accustomed as I am to reckon on your affection, I do not allow myself to judge, despite the pain such a novel proceeding on your part causes me, and still less to accuse you of having changed towards me. Unless I see it with my own eyes, I shall never believe in an injustice on your part, it would be retrograding from the good path you are in. My trust in God is too boundless to believe He would thus withdraw His light from you. Besides, I remember your word passed to me at Heidelberg. You felt then that the enterprise was no easy one. What does one achieve without difficulty in this world,

and what does the Gospel tell us of the duty of "continuing in good works"? Without mentioning the interest that your sister's happiness might inspire in you, hers who is tenderly attached to you, I will only speak to you of a deeper interest, that called into being by religion. Do not neglect a good action, forgive and put yourself above the things which are so much below you. I know enough of what goes on not to see the pernicious influence of bad habits unchecked by bitterness and the spirit of deceit. You, who have the ease due to power on earth, and the force of a purified religion, cannot fail to exercise a charity which is enjoined on us by Him Whom we adore. The timidity, the weakness due to a conscience which is not above reproach, are the only checks, and not a feeling of hostility, trust me for that. I will show you the proof in writing when we meet. Besides, *the principle which inspired actions that perchance were blameful is a love of country respectable when guided by discernment. Your equity cannot fail to see it.*

Taking all this into consideration, understand still better the longing I have to see things settled in Germany. You will have reason to chide me ten years from now, with God's help, if folks fall back into such a false course, but I am happily assured of the contrary, and base my assurance on the power of religion and truth. Pardon again for remooting to you a subject of which you must be wearied: think of what I say, I have matured it in the silence of meditation and prayer. Farewell, friend, you well know that no one loves and values you more than I.

P.S.—I was going to close my letter when the idea occurred to me you might believe they urge on or excite me. It is so little the case that I have guessed things without knowing the details to this hour, and that out of regard for the bond of affection which unites us twain,

they have decided not to see me before I have seen you so as to avert suspicion. Whatever pain it may cause me, I feel the delicacy of the course.

XCI.

No Date.

I have just had a letter from the Prince telling me, dear friend, he has asked you at what moment you would let him come to Russia. You answered him that depended on the ending of Princess Charlotte of Bavaria's business. According to the last news I have from the King it is almost finished; but without dwelling on that, I think I dare remind you that at Heidelberg and Vienna you never put this supposed obstacle forward, which is none, for the Prince has been at liberty to marry more than a year by the laws of Church and State: it is only the Princess who is not yet so. I beg of you, then, to take that into consideration and give a decision. Why withdraw from me your affection, your kindnesses of heretofore? You know all the same you have no better friend than I. I write to the Prince to induce him to come this way. Believe me, yours with all my heart.

I ask you again to call to mind your own letter in which you tell me you are writing to Mother to get her to say things may take place at Stuttgart on your return.

95.

BRUSSELS,

October 1st.

DEAR FRIEND,

Here I am away from that accursed Paris ! I have been here since the evening before last : I am off again instantly for Dijon, for the review of the Austrian Army. Do not be angry with me for my silence : I simply had no time, and besides, had nothing good to tell you. As to Mother's reply, while leaving the place where the marriage is celebrated to my choice, she did it in a manner so clearly against the grain and in a way to convince me it displeased her, that according to my way of feeling that amounted to an avowed condemnation. She added, moreover, one condition, to wit, that the Pope shall have declared the nullity of his first marriage to Charlotte. Now, up to the present moment, I have not been able to obtain this. Besides, when my duties call me to Russia, how can I remain in Germany long enough for the indispensable preparations ? Thus all that put together leaves no choice, and I see no other way than to pull the thing off in Russia. I shall be at Berlin by October 25th, probably Marie is coming there : if you could manage to be there it would be quite a kindness.

I told you at the beginning of my letter I had nothing good to tell you of Paris. In goodsooth I saw around me only a desire to batten on poor France, and a wish to give rein to that passion of vengeance which I sovereignly despise. I found no softening of my cares of all kinds but in the sublime consolations that flow from the Supreme Being. Farewell, dear, I have a real want to see you again. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

P.S.—From Dijon I shall take the route by Basle,

Zurich, and Bregenz to Nuremberg, in order again to get ahead of my columns, so that I shall not pass through Weimar.

XCII.

WEISBADEN,
October 4th.

I hasten to reply to your letter from Brussels, dear. To see your writing and assure myself you have nothing against, gave me much pleasure. However, I do not disguise from you the pain the contents of that letter caused me: you know the good reasons I have for wishing to see my affair in Germany settled. Everything at Petersburg is painful to me, but the Will of God be done and you, only do not desert me! I send you this express, begging you to tell me if you have nothing against my coming to Berlin a day or two after you, and inquire of you if you do not know where and if the Prince will see me. I have not time to send him an express, besides, I do not know where to find him. I will wait for your answer at Frankfort. Perhaps, at least, I shall have the good luck to see him, for without that it will mean waiting a long time. I expect to stay there till the 15th or 16th, if I get no decided negative before then. You can well believe in the longing I have to see you, knowing the devotion I bear you. The Prince wrote me to-day he would come and see me at Frankfort, where I proceed on the 8th. I rejoice greatly to see you; even if the Prince was not to me a reason for delaying, I should still have asked you to get there later so as to evade the first hubbub. I am enchanted that, without waiting for my letter, he should have craved to see me, and I write to him to make haste. Farewell, dear, I am yours with all my heart.

96.

BASLE,

October 9th.

DEAR FRIEND,

The King has sent me two letters from you, and Brunner has just brought me the answer to mine. There would be many pages to write to you to prove to you, as two and two make four, that, while you call others unfair, it is you that are wholly so. I keep it to tell you by word of mouth at Berlin. I will only tell you here, for lack of time, two things, it is Mother who is set on the annulling of the first marriage* by the Pope, and at bottom she is right, but that is already done: the second is that you should remember that I have constantly preached to you that your marriage should not take place save in the manner most pleasing to Mother, and can only be blessed like that. This should explain to you all the rest. Farewell, dear, wholly yours, heart and soul, for life. Do not reach Berlin save when you yourself wish: I shall not be there till October 23rd n. st.

1817.

97.

PETERSBURG,

January 28th.

It is General Balachor who will hand you these lines, dear. I envy him the task, for I greatly crave to

* The Prince Royal of Würtemberg was married the first time to a daughter of the King of Bavaria, but divorced her. He married again in 1816 the Grand Duchess, by whom he had two daughters. The elder married Count Neipperg, the younger the Prince of Orange, later King of Holland as William II. His divorced wife became later the fourth wife of Francis I., Emperor of Austria.

see you again, and cannot yet be sure when and how it can come about. Meanwhile all that you tell me of your domestic happiness delights me, and thank Divine Providence for it. Your letters afford me the greatest pleasure every time.*

I sincerely regret, dear, that I cannot be a party to what you ask me concerning Prince Paul.† The honour of the uniform relieves me of responsibility, he simply deserted from the Army, after that it would be offending the service to put him back again. Besides, when you think it over, you will see that this means would not even compass the end, for as soon as Prince Paul were placed as you ask it in your letter, to wit, under a strict superior and far from cities, he would not obey a fortnight, and if he doesn't desert a second time assuredly he will send me a request to retire, for the leading of such a life cannot be welcome to him. Then what will he have got? He will leave Russia afresh, and be again in the same plight as he is now. Thus it seems to me better to leave him there. Believe me, it needs reasons as grave as those of not offending a whole army to prevent me complying with your desires: his reputation is thoroughly blown on among us.

You ask me, dear, what *I am doing*. Always the same thing, to wit, accustoming myself more and more to bow to the Decrees of Providence, and even finding a sort of satisfaction in the total isolation in which I am. All the rest is in *absolutely the same state* as in your day.

The news you gave me caused me much pain. It is one cruel trial the more for that angel of patience. Farewell, dear, keep your affection for me, and do not forget a brother who adores you with all the powers of his soul. Wholly yours for life.

* There is no letter from the Grand Duchess later than 1815.

† Brother of William I., King of Würtemberg.

1818.

98.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE,
October 12th.

As I am writing to Mother,* I want to send you also a few lines, dear sweet friend, and thank you for your kind letter which Colonel Bangord has had given to me, for he himself is ill. I want also to convey to you all the extreme satisfaction I had from the moments we passed at Frankfort together, and all the affection you showed me, as also Fritz, and which is so precious to me.

I await with lively eagerness those I look to spend near you at Stuttgart. Farewell, dear gentle friend, I have only time to embrace you a thousand fold.

 99.

WEIMAR,
December 6th.

I pen these lines to you, dear friend, to offer you my congratulations and good wishes on this anniversary.† May you be as happy as I wish you, in all the true extent of the word, and then you would lack nothing. I regret, endlessly, not having been able to spend this day with you, but although far from you my thoughts remain with you. I am much affected by your conduct to me at Stuttgart, as also the King: give

* The Empress Marie was also at Stuttgart then.

† The day of St. Catherine.

him a thousand kind messages from me, and tell him how much I am alive to it.

Farewell, dear, think sometimes of a brother who adores you with the keenest tenderness. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life. Many remembrances to the children.

Kindly hand the enclosed to Michael. If by any chance he is gone, tell the orderly to go and take it to him.

NOTES BETWEEN EMPEROR ALEXANDER AND THE GRAND DUCHESS CATHERINE.

1.

DEAR FRIEND,

As probably the "Family Portrait" will be to-morrow or Monday, I don't know if you can have me to dinner to-day? That would admit of my seeing you and showing you some interesting papers. Wholly yours.

2.

DEAR FRIEND,

I wanted to do like last Sunday, but that I cannot because of a number of presentations I must go through. Wholly yours.

3.

Scarcely have I finished with a post that came to me from Vienna when a second reaches me. It is impossible for me to stir, dear, so I must give up coming to see you this evening. I hope to be more fortunate to-morrow. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

4.

I own to you, dear, that to-day is a day when I like best to be alone, but to-morrow will you not be dining at home the same way, and then I shall most certainly come. Try to get that done if it can be. Wholly yours, heart and soul, thanking you a thousand times.

5.

DEAR FRIEND,

Now it is two days that I have been deprived of the pleasure of seeing you. My work did not end till after 11. I request your consent to my coming to hear Mass at your place. I suppose it is at 10 like the other time. Although your singers are come, mine will come too, if you allow them. I take it yours have colds from the journey, and are tired. However, I will tell you by word of mouth the true reason. Wholly yours, heart and soul for life.

6.

Tell me, dear, how the dinner will be, with Mother or we two together as last time? Wholly yours.

7.

I told George, dear, I would come directly after dinner. I thought you would dine with Mother, but if so be you can arrange a dinner with you, do it to-morrow and I will certainly come. To-day, I am to have people at home. Wholly yours.

8.

It is now quite a long time since we enjoyed the pleasure of having H.M. the Empress at dinner with us. Would it suit her to have it fixed for to-day, towards 3 o'clock?

9.

DEAR FRIEND,

Do not you think that since we are not to dine alone to-day, we might invite Joseph? * It would give him pleasure to dine that day with you, and as for me, it would give me the opportunity of seeing him. The Empress, I take it, could not be annoyed at it. What do you think?

10.

Madame Moreau, receiving 30,000 Rs. a year, I propose to have her paid half that sum at the rate of 25 stuyvers a R., and the rest will continue to be paid in paper as hitherto.

11.

Here, dear, is the note I got last evening on getting back from the Chychy's. † It was past 1 A.M. As for Pozzo, he will not leave till Saturday, so when we meet to-day we shall have full time to make our arrangements. Wholly yours.

I.

DEAR FRIEND,

The Emperor has told me he will come at 8. So will you let it be at 8.15? Excuse me, but you yourself fixed 9 o'clock.

12.

That will do very well, dear: excuse the way I put you off, but the time agreed for us at Molly's is 9.45.

* Archduke Joseph of Austria, Palatine of Hungary, husband of the late Grand Duchess Alexandrina.

† Note from Count Nesselrode: "Mme. Moreau's allowance is thirty thousand roubles: she has beside received a hundred thousand down. I wanted to make sure of the fact, which has kept me from answering Y.I.M. sooner. General Pozzo will wait for orders.—NESSELRODE."

13.

DEAR,

Here are two letters I got for you by post while at Riga, but I own frankly to having forgotten to send you them. Wholly yours.

14.

I hope you have not forgotten, dear, to secure H.M. the Empress for dinner to-day ?

15.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am told this moment you and August are dining with me. I fancy it is some mistake and the Prince Royal knows beforehand that he is always welcome. If there be still occasion to repeat it, take it on yourself, and tell him once for all that it is always when he finds it suitable. As for August, I shall be delighted to see him.

16.

June 23rd.

What are you doing to-day, dear ? Will you come and see the 3rd Division of Hussars, and will you dine with me or do you prefer I should dine with you ? Only answer me frankly, and above all decidedly. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

II.

How are you, friend ? Here is a note I have just received from the Empress. I begged her to conceal it was my birthday, but there was no doing so : kindly give me your orders for dinner. Excuse this signature.

17.

We all have to reproach ourselves with having forgotten, thanks to the new style, that to-morrow was the 10th of the old. The country excursion is fixed for to-morrow, so if that may be, under the plea of curtailing the ceremonies, beg that the dinner be left till to-day, and that to-morrow there be nothing but visits. I feel as I did yesterday, dear.

18.

I forgot to tell you, dear, it's the birthday of Virginia's little one. I don't know if I ought not to send him some toy, and I don't know where to get any. You would be very kind if you helped me a little to do so.

19.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I send you the newspaper article published yesterday. I hope your letters tally with this shade, but if they should chance to differ, as they are not gone yet, I would much beg you to shape them accordingly. Pass this note on from one to the other

20

Would it not be possible to get the Empress to make the dinner be at 3 o'clock? It is the hour at which she always dines at the King of Prater's, and at my Royal Consort's: but you must do it without showing my note.

21.

Here is the *Moniteur* which H.M. the Empress has kindly lent me, and which I beg you to return to her, laying my thanks at her feet.

22.

I have got Mother to agree, dear, to the betrothal being on December 27th, and the wedding on January 8th. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

III.

Who prompts your Emperor? Metternich! And he is set on by Castlereagh, who in his turn is an instrument of the sect of which Humboldt is one of the chief leaders as the most active; that sect desires the overturning of all thrones, and as the greatest are those of Austria and Russia, it wants to begin with them. Metternich perhaps sees wrong, but means right. They are trying to knock him over, they will succeed, and I have even made a bet thereon with mother Emp. (*sic*). They want to put Stadion in his place, who is up to the ears the tool of the sect and thereby of the Empress.* Although she did not wish to reply categorically to my question, was he a worthy man or not, I could plainly see she was of the latter belief. "If Metternich, then, is as you paint him, why do you not hold together?" "Oh, *because he will not*, he dreads the jealousy of the Emperor. And then, if it was officially, that would strike and covertly deprive me of the right of telling the Emperor the truth."

23.

I see no objection, dear, to to-morrow's dinner taking place as usual, since the last of the troops will have marched past by 11. The following days there will likewise be troops marching in, so there would be no gain in putting it off.

* The Empress of Austria.

IV.

The Prince is with me and bids me tell you, dear friend, that he is asked to a military conference at Metternich's, at eight this evening: that being so, would you not rather see him to-morrow morning, that he may give you an account of the two scores?

24.

Very gladly, and I shall be ready to receive him at half-past ten.

25.

You certainly forgot to have Joseph told, for here he is come.

26.

I hope all the same, dear friend, that it was not the outcome of something you confided in him as to my harangues of yesterday against that dinner?

27.

Answer *your* Princess* that you have already sent word to Princess Auersperg that you will come to-day, for, having sent to ask after her health, I took the liberty of giving her warning in your name that you will come as it was agreed on between us.

* Princess Volkonsky, who had had from Princess Auersperg the following letter:

"MY PRINCESS!

"I have learnt from my niece, Princess Gabrielle, that Mme. the Grand Duchess wished to do us the honour to come and see our winter-garden, and that she fixed on to-day for the purpose. I wish it all the more that, providing only she continues to be such as she is at this moment, she would be very favourable to the aim H.I.H. sets before herself. Allow me then, Princess, to take the liberty of applying to you to beg you to let us know the orders and the day when we may flatter ourselves with the honour of receiving her at our place, to pay our respectful homages to her. Receive the assurance of the exalted sentiments with which I have the honour to be, my Princess, your very obedient servant,

"PRINCESS AUERSPERG."

28.

DEAR FRIEND,

We are dining with you, and as the brother-in-law will be of the party, too, it would be suitable if Papa was so, too. Wholly yours, heart and soul, for life.

29.

Here, dear, is Speransky's letter and others from Magintzky, which I have just received. Wholly yours.

30.

Here, dear, is the rough copy of my letter to the Duke, which you have had the extreme goodness to wish to copy. Keep the original to show it him, that he may see it is from me. I am coming to you at ten o'clock to bid you a farewell which is painfully trying to my heart. Wholly yours.

31.

I have always been anxious to do good, I have never been wishful to make a stir, because I have found that noise did not do good, and good did not make a noise.

32.

MY KIND FRIEND,

My faithful Ilya* would be greatly pleased if you would do him the honour to be god-mother to a child his wife has borne him these last days. If that does not put you out, I shall be very grateful to you. If you consent, it will be after dinner to-day, at five, and I shall have the honour to let you know when all is ready.

Forgive my insistence.

* Elias Baikov, the Emperor's coachman.

33.

Tell me, dear, what is the hour in your day it is most convenient to you to receive me ? I have ordered my own in such a way that it is absolutely no matter to me so long as I know. Wholly yours.

34.

DEAR FRIEND,

As it is at *seven* that the little ceremony at my Mother's comes off, precisely as that came about the eve of your betrothal, I shall be with you precisely at five. We shall then have more than an hour to chat together. Wholly yours.

35.

Your orders are executed : can I come and see you, dear, immediately after dinner ? Wholly yours, heart and soul.

36.

I think, dear, that in accepting the horse and giving the Ambassador a return present, we may have our conscience much at ease. Forgive my not answering you yesterday, but from dinner till night I was always with the Pharisees, and this morning I knew you were amove. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

37.

Have you some special reason, dear, for wishing that it should be the very priest that George had to perform the ceremony ?* It seemed to me that any other would be preferable, but I am ready in that to follow your preference. Wholly yours.

* The second marriage with the Prince Royal of Würtemberg.

38.

You take me, dear, wholly unawares. Knowing nothing of your plans, I have so laid it out that I have work for the whole evening, and that work that I cannot put off, too, since it must be ready by to-morrow. So receive my regrets, dear.

39.

Let me know, dear, if your outing with H.M. the Empress will take place, and at what o'clock.

V.

If you have on edge while reading me your woebegone lines, I own to you that I am still more so at this moment and, to boot, dread committing an indiscretion. As the Prince comes to me for lack of time after an hour and a half, I ask of you as a gage of friendship to tell me candidly if he would bother you at dinner, and if not, invite him yourself, since I shall see him too late in the day. But if you do me a *courtesy*, I shall regard it as an unfriendly act: you have given me the right to be your handy movable about you which you care not what you do.

40.

I give you my word I shall be very delighted to dine together. Why cannot I aspire to your handy movable also, since you are mine?

41.

A thousand thanks, dear: yesterday evening's cure was so efficacious that it has cured me altogether, the more so that the ill I so dreaded has happily caused none. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

VI.

A thousand and thousand pardons, friend, for pestering you, but I dare do nothing without your consent. Would it be well or ill done to ask Wintzingerode* to dine with me? A verbal answer, please.

42.

Why not? It will be very much to the point.

43.

Lay these *Moniteurs*, I beg of you, dear, from me before the Empress, and at once, and afterwards, when she has given you them back, you can amuse yourself with them.

VII.

I received the other day a letter from Arseniev, asking me to take him back. I am by no means tempted to do it, the more so that he talks to me of his sacrificing the last campaign to me. If you agree, I will send him the answer that you respect his warlike ardour and that he has to do like his comrades, since he no longer belongs to me. Let me have "yes" or "no" by the man.

44.

It is very right.

45.

Send me, dear, for a moment your great seal with your arms.

46.

This is a little strong, and putting this little touch with that of the Archduke Charles, no more would

* The Prince Royal of Würtemberg.

be needed, I take it, to decide that the fellow Francis is a rare liar, if I did not know by experience that the deaf, male and female, have at times quite a way of their own of understanding each other, and here there is not only one deaf woman, but two, Marie and the Empress, who is not a little so herself. Hence I suspend my judgment to have no sin on my conscience.

Wholly yours.

47.

Not to give Metternich any answers, I told him I should have the honour of speaking to the Emperor myself, without ever telling him whether it was this evening or to-morrow morning. I was meaning to give Joseph notice, so that if the Emperor should want to have a talk with me he may appoint when that shall take place. A thousand thanks for your attention. Wholly yours.

48.

I would have gladly profited by your kind invitation, but cannot, having too much to do.

49.

DEAR FRIEND,

Not being able to come to you, as I had intended doing this afternoon, I suggest to you, if you have nothing better to do, to have me to dinner to-morrow. Wholly yours, heart and soul.

50.

It is very kind on your part, dear, to take so much pains over sending me my Easter egg, and I say in return that I shall fall asleep with the sweetest of smiles on my lips. Likewise, I find it great pity that you cannot see this bewitching expression of my countenance. Good-night. Wholly yours.

51.

Is our Eugene of Würtemberg a Most Serene Highness or a Royal? I need to know to address my letter rightly.*

I.

(PAGE 225 OF ORIGINAL.)

EXTRACT FROM MEMOIRS OF PRINCESS
LIEVEN.†

LONDON,
in 1814.

The Emperor Alexander reached London in June, 1814. Important events had led up to this visit. The all-powerful, though unassuming, chief of the great coalition of Kings and peoples, Alexander, had led them into the heart of France without any fixed conclusion as to what was to become of that country. There had been no talk, still less an understanding, on so grave a matter. Men knew what they had come to destroy, but not yet what should be built up. All was uncertainty on so prominent a point, and the Emperor's delicacy was the first hindrance.

It was the Regent of England that ventured to speak first. The conferences at Chatillon were but little to his liking, for he feared above all a compromise with

* Judging by their contents these notes of the Emperor's seem almost all to date from the Congress of Vienna in 1814.

† The Emperor's Private Library, Case IV., No. 4. (These relations dated back to the year 1794, when he was selected by the Empress Catherine, together with Admiral Korsakov, to escort the Comte d'Artois to England.)

Napoleon. Mastered by this idea, he determined to hinder it at all hazards, and, making no great scruple about transgressing constitutional principles, he employed my husband in great secrecy, and totally without the knowledge of his ministers, to propose on his part to Alexander the restoration of the Bourbons.

M. de Lieven was in very close personal touch in London with the French Royal Family. The Regent's overture found him full of eagerness: he at once communicated the proposal to the Emperor, who received it, in his turn, as a solution of great perplexities. Lightly passing over the suggestion of discretion put forward by my husband, the Emperor hastened to let Lord Castlereagh know that he shared and would support the view of his master. This news came upon the English minister like a thunderclap. He wrote from Chatillon to his colleagues in London expressing his astonishment and vexation: and when L——* too learned the fact from the same source, he fell into a great rage. Lord Castlereagh bitterly reproached the Regent for the very unusual initiative upon which he had ventured, and my husband to some extent also for the importance he had attached to the mere word of the Regent, and having kept it from the English Cabinet. The matter caused much disturbance for some days in the British Cabinet, though soon after later despatches from Lord Castlereagh restored peace there. There were certain indications that the Bourbons would be accepted by France without repugnance, and that the Emperor of Austria would not be too much hurt by the throne being taken from his son-in-law. There being thus no more to say on the score of delicacy, it became clear that the Regent's proposal had been very well timed, and that it put everybody at his ease. The main question being thus solved, the Chatillon conferences

* Liverpool, the Prime Minister.

ended in nothing, and the allied armies marched on Paris.

This occurrence, so fertile in results, made the already cordial relations between Emperor and Regent become unexpectedly intimate. They had in a manner conspired together, and that successfully. State ties had been strengthened by a personal tie. The Regent's chief dream was now a meeting with the Emperor, and from that moment he heaped him with urgent requests to come over to England. The Emperor promised to do so.

The Emperor's fame had now reached its greatest splendour. Never had monarch owned a more wondrous reputation for greatness and personal glory, and the whole English nation awaited his coming with passionate impatience and enthusiasm.

At Court the feeling had not remained quite the same. The Emperor had spent two months at Paris. The latter part of his stay had been overcast by some clouds between him and the restored dynasty. He had not found the King of France as grateful or as polite as he thought he was entitled to expect. He was displeased with the King's near advisers, and the reactionary ideas that held the sway in the circle of courtiers. He had always been given to very Liberal leanings, and they here developed more fully. He liked having men of that colour about him. At the same time, he showed great favour to the memories of the Empire, and displayed preferences which began to give umbrage to certain Cabinets. His hegemony was well-established and acknowledged, but no sooner at Paris than Prince Metternich and Castlereagh had felt the need of propping each other mutually to restrain the impulses of a somewhat too lively imagination. From that period dates the very close relation between the two ministers.

The Regent, on his part very Bourbonic and anti-

Liberal, was somewhat disappointed at the leanings and conduct of the Emperor. Therefore, *sooth to say*, at the moment of his coming to London the admiration professed heretofore for him by the Regent was somewhat discontinued. Another circumstance had likewise contributed to it.

The Grand Duchess Catherine, the Emperor's sister, and widow of the Prince of Oldenburg, had been in London since March, *i.e.*, three months before the Emperor's visit. She was a very remarkable person in all respects. It was known that she held great sway over her brother, and if this power was not exerted in matters of State, it was at least real enough in private relations.

The Grand Duchess had an excessive thirst for authority and a very high opinion of herself, which perhaps exceeded her deserts. I never saw a woman so given over to the need-stirring acting, coming to the fore and effacing others. She was very seductive in glance and manners, an assured gait, a look proud but gracious, features but scantily classic, but a dazzling brilliance and freshness of complexion, a bright eye, and the most beautiful hair in the world. Brought up in the highest school, she had an exquisite sense of good breeding, and great loftiness of feeling. She expressed herself shortly, with eloquence and grace, but never let drop the tone of command. Her mind was cultivated, brilliant, and daring; her character resolute and imperious. She startled and astonished the English—more than she pleased them.

At the time of her coming to England and for some years before, the Court was wholly centred in the person of the Regent. The Queen, his mother, never left Windsor, save for some rare moments, nor, since the King's madness, did she receive anyone there, the Princesses, her daughters, being always with her. The Princess of

Wales was banished from Court. The Duchess of York lived in retirement in the country, alone among a menagerie of monkeys and dogs; she was a clever woman, good-hearted and strange. Prince Charlotte was as yet too young to appear at her father's Court. Of the Princes, the Duke of York alone was often at his brother's, those of Clarence and Kent rarely, he of Sussex, never. The Dukes of Cumberland and Cambridge were on the Continent. There was not, properly speaking, any Court in London. The Queen held two drawing-rooms there yearly, and sometimes at long intervals spent an evening at the Prince Regent's.

The Prince very often had us to dinner or in the evening: he came to dinner with us and some of his subjects, and had remained on the footing of going into Society.

The Grand Duchess had caused her coming to England to be made known. The Regent had sent vessels to receive her, and told off an equerry, Sir Hilgrom Turner, to attend her, but he offered her no rooms in the Palace. We had got ready for her Pulteney House in Piccadilly, looking on the Green Park, and we went to meet her at Sheerness with the Regent's carriages.

I found the Duchess much elated with the glory of Russia, and eager to get the benefit of it in England, greedy of everything, especially people, and most impatient to make acquaintance with the Regent. With this were clearly blended plans of conquest, which she had not lacked anywhere.

The day after her coming the Prince came to visit her. He had given notice of so doing. Whether by forgetfulness or ill-chance the Duchess had not done dressing when he came. She had meant to receive him at the head of the staircase, but only my husband and I were there. She came on the scene in all haste, but the Regent was

already in the drawing-room. Her toilet was only half made. She was upset, the reception was affected by it, and she was not as much at ease as usual.

She passed into her cabinet with the Regent, where they remained alone, coming out in a quarter of an hour. She went back with him as far as the staircase. I saw at once the private talk had not been a success, for both looked indifferently pleased. The Prince said to me as he passed, "Your Grand Duchess is not good looking." She said to me subsequently, "Your Prince is ill-bred."

The Queen came to town that same day to receive the Duchess, who went to pay her respects to her at Buckingham Palace. An hour later they met again at Carlton House, where she also was. At that dinner it was already clear to everybody that the Prince and she could not suit each other. She still wore mourning for her husband, and talked rather readily of her grief.

The Regent had small belief in it. His talk was, as a rule, a trifle light, but as he had wit and tact, he quickly got his bearings, and managed to restrain himself. To my great surprise, instead of adopting his pace to that of the Duchess he made pretty frank remarks about her mourning and her sorrow. He was bold enough to foretell she would console herself, and committed even the more grievous fault of not mingling any personal vanity with it. It was a lamentable beginning: she answered by an astonished silence and looks full of haughtiness. There was always music of an evening at Court. That day the Italians had been commanded. The Duchess declared music made her ill, so the musicians were sent away, and we no longer knew what to do. The Queen and Regent were cross about it; the evening was spoiled. The Duchess was much delighted with this annoyance. From that evening she and the Regent hated each other mutually, and the feeling remained to the end.

When she saw for a certainty that she had completely displeased the Regent, she looked out for all opportunities of doing so still more. She hit the mark. She treated the ministers very coldly, and showed marked impoliteness to the Marchioness of Hertford, the Regent's mistress, whose husband had the highest post at Court. She got on intimate terms with Princess Charlotte, who stood very ill with her father. She welcomed the Opposition, and kept all her pleasant ways for the people most openly hostile to the Court. Lastly, she was for becoming acquainted with the Princess of Wales, which meant breaking wholly with the Regent. My husband, hearing of the letters passing with this object, did his utmost to dissuade the Grand Duchess. Seeing he was not succeeding, he at last went so far as to declare that as the Emperor's Ambassador he would not allow H.I.H. to adopt her hostile attitude towards the Sovereign to whom he was accredited, and if she held to her plan of seeing the Princess, he would be unable to carry on the affairs of his Government, and would tell the Emperor so. As she saw him very determined, she gave way, but she never forgave him, and told him as a *riposte* that she would excuse him from waiting on her. From that moment our dealings with her waxed very strange. At her coming she had asked to come and dine certain days in the week, so as to meet in turn the chief people in Society. There were some objections to that. The Duchess controlled the lists, and her preference was for Whigs: she demanded the exclusion of people about Court and rarely allowed ministers. Every dinner led to a small dispute between her and my husband. He thought he was freed from that annoyance at least, but she did not so understand it. I had continued to wait on her every morning, as my husband urged me to do, seeing that I was now the sole link between her and

the Embassy. It was there that I entered on my diplomatic apprenticeship, and first over the dinners. I disputed the invitations step by step; sometimes I gained the day, for the Duchess allowed discussion, and I often managed to exclude favourites, and get people put in whom she greatly disliked. At these dinners, M. de Lieven never failed to go and receive her at the foot of the staircase. She took his arm to go to table, and he sat beside her, but *never* did she speak a word to him. These dumb dealings went on for two months, and she only began to speak to him again just before the Emperor's coming.

All this time of the spring of 1814 was so full of notable events that not a day passed without some stirring news from France. The Duchess liked to know everything, and my husband told me what I could repeat to her, so that she was much bent on remaining on good terms with me. I must add that never at any time did she cease to treat me with kindness and friendship. All the great houses in London made a point of asking her to dinner as she would never go to a party. She thus went the round of English Society, and was always noticed for her air of distinction and sprightly, clever and agreeable conversation. Wherefore she went she insisted on uniform, and the English gave way.

The day of Louis XVIII.'s entry into London, she asked the Queen to come and see the procession pass from her house. The Regent had gone to meet the King at the last stage, at Hartwell: he was in a gilt coach and eight, with the French King and the Duchess d'Angoulême. They came, escorted by some thousands of horsemen, great noblemen or small gentry came from London, and all the neighbouring counties' best, riding the finest horses in England, and all with the white cockade in their hats. All London was there,

shouting and applauding. You might have thought it was the restoration of an English King. One cannot exaggerate the magnificence and splendour of the sight or the effect of these acclamations. The King got down at the Grillon Mansion in Albemarle Street. There the body of Ambassadors and the English Cabinet were gathered. In was in their presence that the King and the Prince exchanged Orders, and that Louis uttered to the Regent the memorable words that History has endorsed: "Under God it is to your Highness that I owe my crown."

That same day the King dined at Carlton House. After dinner there was a reception, where the Duchess made his acquaintance: the ladies were presented to him by the Regent. I saw him again afterwards under his own roof: he received me just at his bedside, for he suffered much from his legs, and never remained standing. He kept me half an hour. His talk was clever, but had something studied about it which to my mind took away all the agreeableness of it.

Our Duchess and she of Augoulême exchanged visits next day, and met in the evening at the Queen's card-party. As seats were being taken she saw there was something awry: restlessness and whispering round the Queen. Hereupon she said out loud to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, "I see what is putting you out, I am going to put you at ease: it is I that ought to come first." And so it came about, the Queen put her on her right.

The Duchess went and spent some days at Brighton. On coming back, she received news that grieved her greatly. She had met, when travelling, the Archduke Charles, and had taken a great fancy to him. She determined to marry him. Nothing was wanting, so she said, on the Austrian side, but the Dowager Empress's consent had to be obtained. The Duchess foresaw

great difficulties, as the Greek Church did not allow of two sisters marrying brothers. She had waited till the last, hoping that by putting the affair forward as settled, she would force the Empress to give way. The Emperor had no objection to the marriage. Feeling assured that it would come about, the Duchess, whose imagination was as fervid as her will, had hotly sided with Austria and all its interests, and really, to see how deep she was in secrets and relations with the Austrian Ambassador, Count Meerfeld, and how she received the Austrian General, Koller,* at all hours, while speaking not a word to the Russian Envoy, you might be led to take her for an Archduchess rather than a Russian Princess.

The Empress's answer was a refusal, and to formally forbid her to marry the Archduke. The Duchess shut herself up for several days to give way to a great attack of despair, and during it I did not see her at all, and she received no one whatever but General Koller, her confidant in the affair. Her strong liking for Austria she did not lose sight of. She showed it later during Prince Metternich's stay in London, whom I have heard her myself give more than sly hints as to the political frame of mind of the Emperor, at a moment when she did not see I was near her, and one, too, when, as I knew, such hints were of genuine importance to the Cabinet of Vienna. Once during her stay in London, my husband ventured to rouse the Emperor's attention to the means of information at Prince Metternich's command, and the real damage done thereby to our interests. The Emperor listened attentively, but nothing gave us ground to suppose that the hint had borne fruit.

The Grand Duchess made two conquests from the

* An Austrian General, born 1770, died 1826. He went with the Emperor Napoleon to Elba in 1814.

visit in England. She had received each of the English Princes in private audience. The Duke of Sussex, who did not go at all to the Regent's Court, asked her for that reason to let him come oftener to her. After some visits, he wrote her a pretty clumsy and far from elegant billet, declaring his love and asking for her hand. She showed me this epistle, laughing over it, and then forbade the Duke her door, and never saw him again. The Duke of Clarence had carried her from Ostend to England in his frigate, and had shown himself very assiduous though respectful towards her. On reaching London, he continued his attentions, though with more tender proofs, and, when he saw his brother of Sussex shown the door, stepped into his place, and the offer of marriage was made, but verbally, and no doubt in sailor fashion. The Duchess took offence at it, and forbade him her door likewise, but not content therewith, and being liable to meet him at Court, she requested the Regent to keep him out of any gathering under his roof where she would be present, which the Regent did with no great reluctance, since his brother did not please him: he found him perfectly stupid. At the same time that she declined husbands, our Duchess took some delight in taking them from others. It was often said and believed in London that her object in inducing Princess Charlotte to break with the Prince of Orange was to keep him for herself. Before that she had been cut to the quick on learning that King Louis XVIII. had set on foot through my husband a negotiation for the marrying of the Duke of Berry to the Grand Duchess Anna. She learned it through a letter from the Emperor. She sent for M. de Lieven (it was at the time when she was still speaking to him) to reproach him very bitterly for having concealed the step from her, and added: "It is of me that the King of France ought to ask an alliance with Russia."

In the last weeks of her being in London, the Duchess fell greatly in love with the Prince Royal of Würtemberg, whom she married a year and a half later. This marriage also met with keen opposition from the Dowager Empress, owing to its being within the degrees prohibited by the Greek Church as before : she married two cousins (german) in succession.

The moment for the visit of the Sovereigns came at last. In their train came all the Princes of Germany, all the leaders of the allied armies, the Prime Ministers, Prince Metternich, and an immense number of strangers. Never did London see or shall see, no doubt, a gathering like to that.

The Regent had got apartments prepared for the Emperor and the King of Prussia in St. James' Palace. The King alone accepted them. The Emperor preferred to live with his married sister, and only used his suite at the Palace for ceremonious receptions. He came from Dover with the King in my husband's travelling carriage, and made his entry into London on Tuesday, June 7th, incognito to the countless crowd that awaited him all along the way. Stands had been erected in amphitheatres from the last stage ; they were choked with sightseers, and the places had been let at exorbitant prices. The two sovereigns were taken for aides-de-camp. The public was a trifle angry at this smuggling in : the English people loves royalty to show itself in state. It loves also, like every other, to have its pleasure and its money's worth : it had been robbed of both.

As soon as the Regent heard that the Emperor had reached Piccadilly, he sent him word he was coming to see him, and we waited for this visit from one o'clock to four. During this time the crowd had not ceased to grow denser : it had become compact, and all the avenues were blocked. The huzzahs did not cease for a moment,

and the Emperor, for whom there were loud cries, showed himself now and again on the balcony, when there were roars of delight. Meanwhile the hours went by, and the Regent did not come. The Emperor began to get impatient, the Grand Duchess smiling as she watched him, and saying, "That's what the man's like." My husband was greatly distressed, foreseeing that this first clumsy move would put the Duchess in the right. She, whose letters had already greatly prejudiced the Emperor against the Regent. At last, at four o'clock, came a note from Bloomfield to my husband to this effect: "His Royal Highness has been threatened with annoyance in the streets if he shows himself: it is therefore impossible for him to come and see the Emperor."

What a confession, and what a prelude to such a meeting! The Duchess did not conceal her joy. The Emperor, having read the note, got into my husband's carriage and went with him to Carlton House. He stayed half an hour with the Regent. On coming out he remarked to De Lieven, "A poor Prince!" To which my husband at once rejoined, "Who helped you to wage a glorious war and to a peace to match."

This rejoinder had small effect; the impression was made, and it remained. The Regent never came once to the Emperor's. The fact that the Emperor had not accepted rooms at the Palace had vexed him at first. Afterwards, he availed himself of the pretext that the entrance to his mansion was too public. This first private meeting was thus the last.

The day after the Emperor's coming, there was a dinner at Carlton House. It was of the coldest, the Emperor looking constrained and bored, while the King of Prussia, habitually stiff and reserved, kept silence and his soldier's mien. The Regent made useless efforts, and the Duchess came to the help of no one. After dinner, a great many

people had'been asked. The plan was awkward enough to my mind. The Queen took her place under a canopy ; people came forward to bow to her, and then defiled or failed to do so before the Emperor, so that the honours of the evening were not for him. He kept to one side, I near him : he sometimes used his spy-glass and asked me the name of certain ladies that struck him.

The Regent went and fetched Lady Hertford to lead her up to the Emperor. He bowed to her, but said nothing. The Regent thought he had not heard clearly, and repeated very loudly, "This is Lady Hertford." That succeeded no better. The Marchioness, who looked very stately, after making a deep curtsy, threw him one of her haughtiest glances. The fate of this whole visit seemed to me written in that glance.

The Regent had been for a long while but, above all, was at that time very unpopular in England. He had a splendid carriage, a quite regal and sovereign look, but had only the externals of royalty, being devoid of high-mindedness and nobility. He was little respected or worthy of it. He had wit, much penetration, little probity, and could never keep a friend. In politics his leanings were very autocratic, he loathed the English constitution, and all constitutions, and said so. There was nothing English in his character. His youth had been very wild ; his morals very lax ; his tastes were luxurious, and his habits idle. He knew how to be gracious, kind, and caressing : but you felt that he might be treacherous.

After having thus told the truth, it would irk me not to express my gratitude. King George IV. never failed to treat me with the greatest kindness : he believed in me and my friendship. He said to me more than once, "You will be the only one to regret me." He was right, both about the others and myself. His whole political and private conduct formed the great contrast with that

of his father, the most truly English King that ever governed the country.

The scandal of the Prince's rupture with the Princess, although perfectly justified by the lax morals of the latter, had yet met with much disfavour from the public. People knew under what auspices the early period of his married life had been passed. He had given her as Lady of Honour his former mistress, Lady Jersey: he had gone on living openly with Mrs. Fitzherbert, to whom he was married. He had encouraged and abetted the Princess's first steps aside, suborned witnesses and spies, and at last forced his wife into starting proceedings, in which King George had openly taken the side of his daughter-in-law, and which ended in her acquittal. The upshot of all this was that for all the Princess's and her being wholly and rightly laid under the ban of society, folks denied the Regent the right to treat her with rigour, and when it came to her being excluded from the Queen's drawing-room, to which she had so far gone in virtue simply of her having been presented, public opinion found vent both in the street and in the Press. The Queen, known as having supported the Prince in his persecution of his wife, shared with him the hostility so expressed.

It was not long since that the Princess had been informed she was forbidden to appear at Court. To make this more easy, the Queen transferred the drawing-room from St. James', where it had always been held, to Buckingham House, also styled Queen's House, and where it was open to her to set up a new etiquette. Soon afterwards a distressing scene took place. As the Queen was going one evening from her Palace to the Regent's, across St. James' Park in a sedan chair, attended by only six footmen carrying torches, the mob suddenly rushed on the train, got hold of the chair, shook the

Queen roughly for several moments, and then let her down on the ground as roughly, on seeing the Guard come to the rescue. We were waiting for her at the Regent's. This occurrence was at once known in drawing-rooms, and made a great sensation ; the Queen, accustomed to control herself, showed nothing.

The Prince Regent, in face of this redoubled unpopularity, took all sorts of precautions to evade the crowd, and when he was recognised, was always greeted with hooting : often they threw mud or stones at him.

It was at this juncture that the Emperor came. The magic effect wrought by his presence, the acclamations which followed him everywhere, afforded the most humiliating contrast possible for the Regent. He was deeply vexed and wounded by it, and soon got into the way of seeing only a rival in the Emperor.

Alexander had one of those countenances that light up and rejoice the heart, an open front, a clear eye, a winning smile, and an expression of kindness, gentleness, general goodwill and purity that were truly angelic. In the last years of his life, there was a touch of the pensive and sad, which spoke alike of melancholy and distrust, and often overcast the general benignity of his features. But this look was passing, and the natural and habitual cast of his countenance was frankness and the reflex of a clear conscience. His stature was great, and his bearing very noble. His style was not beyond reproach, in a drawing-room especially it had more the elegance of the young man than the dignity of the Emperor : the elegance even seemed a little assumed. However, on the whole the effect of his presence was very noticeable. It everywhere struck and impressed, and when to this natural gift we add the halo of glory at that time crowning him, the prodigious enthusiasm he evoked in England can be understood. In the streets, in the

city, in the theatres, frantic transports broke out. During the fortnight of his stay in London, I do not exaggerate in declaring there were never less than ten thousand persons watching the part and street where his mansion stood. Traffic was wholly stopped at certain hours, and only once did he succeed in taking a walk at his ease, and that by going out privily through the mews. When he got into or out of his carriage a most original struggle arose, everybody wanted to shake hands with him. He acceded with perfect good humour, which delighted the mob. I went one day with him and the Duchess to a sitting of the Lower House. She was back from her farewell visit to Queen Charlotte, and was wearing a cordon fastened on the shoulder with a rich clasp of diamonds. As we got out before the Parliament House, the crowd, which was given to pressing round the Emperor, was so great that in his eagerness an enthusiast pulled the Duchess's clasp loose. I was the first to see it, but before I had time to speak the clasp was handed back with profuse apologies. This greatly tickled the Emperor.

In society his success was no less, though of a different order. There he was to the full the young man, and nothing else: a fine waltzer, gallant to women, though confining himself to the young ones, and sternly refusing a civil word to those that were not. One evening, at Marchioness Cholmondeley's ball, I said to him, pointing to the Marchioness of Hertford just by him, and to whom he had not yet said a single word, "There, sire, is someone who awaits and hopes for a word from you." He replied, "She is mighty old," and did not go near her. The young did not mind this taste in him. He was surrounded and flattered, his conquests as manifold as his gallantries. Sometimes he looked embarrassed by it, for the advances of some women³ found vent in strange

fashion. That same evening, Lady Sarah Bayley, very handsome, above all very fair and very stupid, called him to her, and being at a loss for something to say to him or better to do, after some minutes' thought, offered him her Eau-de-Cologne bottle. The Emperor held back—she insisted—he would not : at last, willy-nilly, she emptied into the handkerchief he held in his hand the whole contents of her bottle, which for the moment caused some detriment to the Emperor's white apparel. He left her abruptly after this baptism, blushing greatly, for ridicule was the thing in the world he most dreaded, and unhappily meeting my eye, he was really vexed about it.

The Emperor brought with him, as I think I have hinted above, certain personal prejudices against the Regent, prompted particularly by his sister. The plight in which that Prince then was in London Society was not such as to dispel them. The most elegant man in England in his person, in his regal splendour, in his education, nay, in his conversation when he chose, for he could talk about everything with judgment, erudition, and good taste, this man, the ruler of Great Britain, was decidedly not in the vogue. People made no honour of being asked to Court, it was even *bon ton* to be excluded from it. Moreover it sometimes happened that Ministers spoke somewhat slightly of him, and pointed out his error to some diplomatic novice, who attached more weight than need be to his views or words. All that had struck the very inquiring mind of the Grand Duchess. She easily transferred all this body of observations to the Emperor's mind, and that with all the exaggeration that her own malevolence could swell it with. The Emperor quickly adopted all her paces. Thus coldness, with a slight shade of contempt, for the Regent ; strict politeness and no more for Ministers ; great cajolery for

the Opposition. The very morrow of his coming he gave private audience to Ld. Holland, and handed him a letter from M. de Laharpe : ardent friendship for Princess Charlotte, and even the intention of paying her a visit. Here is what passed on that head :

The Princess had made all haste to write to him, wishing him joy of his coming, and expressing a keen desire to see him. The Emperor, informed of my husband's conduct towards his sister on the same occasion, wanted to go into the matter with him before answering the Princess. He had, however, made up his mind to visit her, and led off by telling my husband so. The latter gave a cry of alarm which much tickled the Emperor. M. de Lieven then apprised him of the formal declaration made to him by Lord Castlereagh on our arriving in England, placing the Princess without the pale of the Royal Family, and announcing that any dealings of members of the Diplomatic Body with her would be looked on by the Regent as a personal affront. This made the Emperor frown, but, after reflecting and being silent some moments, he declared, "I am not ambassador nor resident at the English Court, I will pay her a visit. I open the Royal Calendar and find there the name of the Princess of Wales : it is my duty to pay my respects to her as to other Princesses." "Very well, sire, fall out with the Regent, and see how it will affect your affairs." The Emperor thought for a moment, said nothing, but did not go to the Princess of Wales. There was a rumour current later that he had made an appointment with her in Kensington Gardens, and that the Grand Duchess was present at this meeting. We have never arrived at the truth of the matter.

While the Sovereigns were there, the Regent went in state with them to the three chief theatres of the capital.

At the Italian Opera an incident occurred which sorely wounded the Regent. Towards the middle of the performance the Princess of Wales rather noisily entered her box, which was opposite the royal one. Her name was uttered by some in the pit. She bent her head to the Emperor, who at once rose, forcing the King of Prussia and the Regent to do the like : whereupon the whole house got to its feet, and tremendous applause rang through it.

From the first moment there had set in between the two Sovereigns a daily contest of pin-pricks through which in sooth my husband and I sank into complete despair more and more every day, for there was no way out of the plight. The Duchess ruled the Emperor, her brother, totally and solely.

The Court took no great trouble for the Emperor. The Regent gave him only two great dinners and two parties, and there was a dinner at the Queen's, at Frogmore. Celebrations of the Peace were in hand, but they did not take place till the Emperor was gone. He had wanted to see King George III., but, after deliberation, it was decided that to show a foreign monarch a mad King would be improper, so he never saw him. The public and society entertained the Sovereigns freely. They dined in the City with the Lord Mayor, the Tailors' and Goldsmiths' Company, all men's dinners, but the Duchess insisted on being present, which somewhat shocked the English. White's Club gave a splendid fête at Burlington House, while the Marquises of Salisbury, Hertford, and Cholmondeley, and Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh gave them balls or dinners. The Regent went with them to all these, but the Emperor went alone to the balls given by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Grey, Lady Jersey, and so forth, all Whig nobles. The City dinner was marvellous for display and splen-

dour, and curious also as being the one occasion on which the Regent met the chiefs of the Whig Party, likewise his personal enemies : else they were not asked anywhere where the Prince might be.

To reach the banqueting-room at the Guildhall, several large rooms had to be passed through where the guests were drawn up. The King of Prussia gave his arm to our Duchess, then came the Emperor, taking in the Duchess of York, then the Regent with me on his arm. As we encountered the Whigs, the Emperor kept stopping. He took Lord Holland's and Lord Grey's, and even talked to them a moment. All these halts forced the Regent to pull up behind him. He was exceedingly vexed thereat, he was by then intimate enough with me to tell me so, and he showed it at dinner by a very haughty silence towards the Emperor and his sister. A strange scene occurred at this banquet. The Duchess did not like music and, moreover, since becoming a widow, often had nervous attacks. The invariable rule at these great dinners is to have national songs. Scarcely had the music struck up when she made signs of distress to me, and at last said in Russian, "If that goes on I shall be ill." I told the Regent, who said quite loud, "The Grand Duchess wants the music to stop," and it did, to the great astonishment of all there.

The royal table was on a dais, there being only Sovereigns, Princes and Ambassadors at it, the rest of the hall being filled with long tables, at which were seven hundred guests, whom he had in full view. I soon saw the disturbance which ran all through this long hall was not one of the least curious episodes in this curious epoch of European history. Prince Metternich, a much amused witness of the sight, turned it to account out of hand. Glancing calmly over this lively scene he easily did some high policy while greatly diverting himself.

He made capital of the Regent's foibles with the Duchess, all whose confidences went to him, and in return laughed at the Emperor to the Regent, which was a sure way of pleasing him. He got complete hold of that Prince's mind. He ministered to all his vain leanings, which were carried to an incredible extent for a Sovereign. He invested him with the Austrian Fleece, which, as King, he never ceased to wear, and made him Marshal of the Austrian armies. The Regent took delight in having a white uniform made. People kept coming and speaking to the Regent in an undertone, and he said to me, "This won't do in England." I raised my brows, having no other answer. At last he begged me to ask the Duchess if she would not allow "God Save the King," to which she haughtily answered, "As if that was not music!" And the Regent gave way. However, a dull murmur began to make itself heard. The Emperor, who was genuinely deaf, had heard neither the words said nor the storm that was brewing, but all eyes at our table were turned on me as if in warning. At last, as the murmur grew, I was making ready to offer a remark to the Duchess, when I received a note in an unknown hand and unsigned, telling me in English, "If your Duchess does not allow the music, we won't answer for the royal table." I at once passed this note to her, and she said, "Well, let them bawl, then!" And "God Save the King" was sung.

As we were leaving table, Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, came up to me and said, "When folks don't know how to behave they would do better to stay at home, and your Duchess has chosen against all usage to go to men's dinners."

From that moment the English Ministers no longer concealed their anger against the Duchess, while she in her turn forgot all bounds in her dealings with the

Regent. At a dinner at Lord Liverpool's, where he was, as usual, seated between her and me, I heard the following dialogue: "Why, then, Your Highness, do you keep your daughter under lock and key, why does she go nowhere with you?" "My daughter is too young, madam, to go into the world." "She is not too young for you to have fixed on a husband for her." "She will not marry for two years." "When she is, I do hope she will manage to make up to herself for her present prison." "When she is married, madam, she will do as her husband pleases; for the present she does as I wish." Here the Duchess looked very fixedly at the Regent and resumed, with a show of softness yet perfectly patent malice: "Your Highness, between husband and wife there can be only one will." The Regent turned sharply towards me and observed pretty loudly, "This is intolerable!"

The day after the City Dinner there was a great review of troops in Hyde Park. The hour was settled, and the meeting fixed at Constitution Hill. The Emperor was there punctually, on horseback, with all his suite, but waited a whole hour for the Regent. The Prince came at last, making some slight excuse, and then only did the review begin. Some days later, at a party at Court, where folks were asked for nine, the Emperor being very late in coming, the Regent sent several times to know if he would come. At last, at half-past eleven, the Emperor did come, making it his excuse that he had been to see *Lord Grey*.

The Emperor did us the honour of asking us to give him a dinner. He simply kept out of it the Regent and his Ministers, and begged us, amongst others, to ask Lord and Lady Lansdowne, *because* they were of the Opposition, and Mrs. Lyttelton, now Lady Hatherton, *because* she was good looking. That seemed curious. I

remember that at the said dinner I talked of the Bourbons with most disdainful irony, which was not unpleasing to the Whigs, and greatly embarrassed Count Nesselrode.

Lady Jersey, who openly boasted her hatred for the Regent, was the woman the Emperor most went after in London. At Lady Hertford's ball in particular he showed her attentions, which were much noticed, and laughed much with her. They say the Regent heard some words uttered very loudly by her, because the Emperor heard badly, and that these implied a very close acquaintance with a joke of which he had been the object.

The Emperor had fixed for June 15th the ball to be given him by Lady Jersey. The Regent named for the 14th the visit to Oxford, evidently with a view to making the Emperor miss the ball. The seeing of various colleges, his reception as doctor of the University, the great banquet at Christ Church, the visit to Blenheim and Stowe, took up a great deal of time, and the Emperor could not get back to London till 3 in the morning of the 16th. He changed his dress and betook himself to Lady Jersey's, which he reached with the sun. She had kept a few people in hopes he might still come, and he danced the reel till five.

As I am on the subject of Lady Jersey, I will finish at once all I have to say on that score. She had been complimented on her Imperial conquest. She believed genuinely that the Emperor was in love with her, and here is what happened a few days later: On the eve of the Emperor's departure, there was a ball at the Marchioness of Devonshire's. My husband had not accepted the invitation she sent him for the Emperor, thinking he would not take it, since he was to be off next day at such an early hour. The Emperor, not

thinking himself asked, could not go, but he knew Lady Jersey was there, and he took it into his head at one in the morning to send his cousin, the Prince of Oldenburg, there, asking Lady Jersey to leave the ball and come to him to say good-bye. Lady Jersey, flattered and alarmed, talked over with her friends there, not whether it was proper to pay the visit at such an hour, but as to what she should do if the Emperor became too pressing. She foresaw all the utmost possibilities, and asked if one might refuse an Emperor. Her friends told her it would be *very uncivil*, that she must go and trust herself to the keeping of Heaven. It appears that the Emperor, on his part, had thought of precautions against her, for he had made his Imperial sister get up, and the Duchess was present at the meeting, which ended at three in the morning. Lady Jersey, who had curious visitors next day, told them with downcast eyes that the Emperor had only asked to kiss her arm above the elbow. This adventure went the round of London.

The Emperor's stay was verging on its end. The occurrences of each day made this end more and more to be wished for : the two puissant Sovereigns of Russia and England were giving way without restraint to the antipathy they had taken to each other. As generally happens in such cases, those about them went one better on the ill-feeling of their masters. In the Emperor's ante-chamber the most contemptuous talk about the Regent circulated freely. Folks did not even refrain from it before Lord Yarmouth, son of Lady Hertford, told off to attend the Emperor during his stay in England. Lord Yarmouth, too, took to being insolent, and there were nearly scenes of violence in the ante-chamber. The A.D.C.'s-General distinguished themselves particularly.

One day, Count Ojarovsky, impatient at the non-

appearance of the Court carriages which came for the Emperor every morning, asked the reason of Lord Yarmouth in an insolent manner. The latter replied it was not yet time. "But the carriages are made to wait, and 'tis your business to see to it." Lord Yarmouth looked as if he did not understand, stretched himself at ease on the sofa, and took a book. Ojarovsky, furious at his coolness, cried to him, "Go you and see if the carriages are come!" Whereupon the other in a very polite and wheedling tone rejoined, "Count, you have a very fine pair of eyes." Then, after a moment, added haughtily and imperturbably, "Go and look yourself."

The Emperor left for Portsmouth on Wednesday, June 22nd. The Regent went to join him there, and show him his Fleet. I did not go with him, so only learned from hearsay the events of these last days, but I know that they bore to the end the seal of vexation and bitterness. They parted at Petworth, at Lord Egremont's, the Emperor and Grand Duchess proceeding from there to Dover by the coast. The Regent came back to London exasperated.

This trip to England, following immediately on the Peace of Paris, and only two months previous to the Congress of Vienna, had no political object. Business was wholly excluded from it, it was a holiday the Sovereigns and their Ministers meant to give themselves, and among the galas and gatherings which were intended to mark the course of it, the one serious thought has been the personal touch between the Emperor and the English Regent. This meeting seemed the necessary compliment, the final consecration of the great European Coalition, which it was hoped would be

cemented by the closer union of the two monarchs who had done most to bring about this great climax.

We have seen how completely that object was missed. The Emperor, miscalculating the worth and weight of the Regent, and struck more than need was by some foibles and weaknesses, and the dislike of the public, treated the Prince with carelessness, lightness, and something like contempt. The Regent had retaliated by great coolness and public lack of attention: a deep hatred had taken root in his heart. A deep contempt for him likewise remained in the Emperor's mind. Carried away by the example, the advice, and the habitual conduct of his sister, he had at the same time offended the whole English Cabinet by his attentions and marked leanings towards its enemies. The greatest coldness reigned from then in the dealings of the two Courts: the mutual friction was turned to account by other cabinets, and the effects of this ill-omened visit made themselves felt six months later at Vienna, when Austria, France, and England signed the famous secret treaty against Russia.

II.

LETTERS OF THE EMPRESS MARIA TOUCHING PROPOSED MARRIAGES OF THE GRAND DUCHESES CATHERINE AND ANNE.

May, 1807.

You asked me yesterday, dear Alexander, what I thought of the proposals the Duke of Brunswick has made you for a union between my daughter Catherine, your sister, and Prince Henry of Prussia, and I have

thought best to give them you in writing, so here they are.

You know I do not give my consent to any proposal of marriage for one of my daughters, save where it is confirmed by her own free choice, whose inclinations I do not hamper on such an important occasion. I therefore wish her consent, based on a personal knowledge of her intended husband, should precede mine. Meanwhile, this personal acquaintance can only come about a year hence ; the present moment, one of general crisis, cannot be favourable to it, but the passing of a year may make us see the scope, loyalty, and sincerity of the feelings of the Court of Berlin towards our own. And if their intentions are still the same, if my daughter, after having come to know the Prince, is led to hope she may be happy with him, she will decide her fate by making her choice, which will determine my consent.

SATURDAY,

May 11th, 1807.

At last, dear and kind Alexander, after waiting 5 days, which seemed to me very long, I received yesterday evening, just as I was going to bed, your letter of May 3rd. It soothed my misgivings, for I own, dear Alexander, that I thought you were in the enemy's hands. I await the details you promise me as to the reason for your going back to Berlin with much impatience, but without letting myself judge of the reason with certainty. I must own to you, dear Alexander, I consider the General responsible for your sacred person should, on his conscience, think twice before any undertaking, and only strike sure blows : that is how I explain

this inaction to myself, till you give me other reasons. I thank you, dear Alexander, for the details you go into touching the establishing of your sister, and, above all, for the confidence displayed in leaving to my decision this matter, so dear and weighty to my heart : I thought it my duty to pass on your letter to Catan, that she may read and see the opinion you have of Emperor Francis, and that she may afterwards express her own, whether we must give up and put aside this plan, or she wishes it adhered to. But before informing you of her decision, I will linger for a moment over your comments, dear Alexander, which I own do not seem to me very serious when you make them on the morality of the Emperor. I fancy I did not tell you that I thought he was free from past weakness, but I believe his religious and moral bent will make preferable a lawful union to a light and vicious existence. Such is my opinion of the Emperor Francis. I disregard his youthful pranks played some thirteen or fourteen years ago in the Low Countries, but I do recall having heard of the Virigano being at Vienna, and the Empress jealous. She was generally blamed, because they said she only went by her imagination, which rendered her unjust towards her consort, but for that matter, supposing him to have been wrong then, does that imply that he should be doing the like now ? It seems to me that at thirty-eight the fire of his passions must be calmed, and, to be sure, dear Alexander, you must be less severe on others, and judge them a little more charitably. The Emperor was a perfect husband to my sister, who loved him tenderly, and was so to the Empress, though I am much led to believe that certainly he was not gallant, as you say, to her, and that wretched story was not set going touching the late-lamented until the ill-starred year 1805. Until then calumny had never sullied her, but the Emperor always was credited

with making her happy, though she was jealous and by no means pretty. You yourself told me, dear Alexander, that the Emperor was an honest, good man and loyal : that hall-marks his character. To be sure it is not all I should desire, but it is a good deal. It remains to be seen whether domestic bliss, the companionship of a good-hearted creature, reasonable and firm, would not evoke the virtues which may only have been repressed by circumstances. You seem to me, dear Alexander, in your letter to feel a poverty in the picture you wanted to make, and that is why I depict the poor Emperor in such unfavourable colours ; but Catan said to me : “ My brother finds him old, but people are not at 38. He is ugly, but I shall never trouble about a man with a handsome face. He is dirty : I will wash him. He is dull and surly : very good, he was so in 1805, he *will* never be hereafter, circumstances made him seem so then.” I swear to you, Alex, that I give you Catiche’s very expressions. You will see from them that she is not repelled by the none too attractive way you have painted the Emperor. I own to you that for my part I am astonished at what you tell me. If it is as a Sovereign he is looked at, you leave me to judge whether anything brilliant appears side by side with his idea. Aye, verily : the Austrian monarchy has suffered terribly, to be sure, but still to be Emperor or Archduke thereof, King of Bohemia and Hungary, and so forth, is in sooth a goodly fate, and for that matter it would only rest with him to take up his part again and recover his place there, here and now.

To conclude, dear Alexander, the friendship you show me in leaving this choice with me, inclines me to beg you to give ear to Catan’s wishes. She thinks this union worthy of her, and, on my soul, I think so myself, and feel sure that the greater part of your subjects will share my

view. Do not think, dear, that I believe it infallible, certainly not. I see great difficulties about it, but anyhow, let us try whether the thing is feasible : we owe it to Catan to prove it her how dear her happiness is to us. It has occurred to me to take from this plan all the political aspect, to look at it as a family matter, and to base it solely on the degree of kinship there is between the Emperor and me. This manner of setting the affair going compromises neither yourself nor your Ministry, and your Ambassador will not appear in the treating until it is assured and has taken the usual course of affairs of this kind. I thought a private letter from the Emperor ought to start it and end, that is seal it. I append this letter, dear Alexander, under a loose seal ; pray read it and that several times. I have tried to speak in it as befits my rank, and to give my wording that stamp of dignity, goodwill, and confidence that the subject demands, while purging it of all political cast : see you whether I have succeeded. I have preferred this way of setting about it to keep the thing secret, to prevent the Ambassador of France learning it, and because it seemed the only way to achieve the aim, or at least attempt it, without forfeiting the dignity of individuals. If the Emperor does not accept the proposal he will put it on the score of religion, one too grave and too respectable for one even to be hurt at it. If you do not approve of my letter, send it back to me and tell me what you want to do. If you do, if the course I put before you pleases you, then seal it and send it, pray, to Kûrakin, with this open note, and be pleased to give him your orders as to what you think fit to add to it. It would seem to me that Kûrakin should appear not to know the contents of my letter, unless the Emperor tells him or gets him told that he is meaning to ask for Catherine's hand. Until that moment we need

complete silence, for the rest you will decide and give your orders accordingly. I have not received General Budberg's confession of faith you speak of, but Catherine makes out it could not be to his detriment that Budberg loves her, and would not stand in the way of a chance so much to her advantage. I stop here for to-day, dear Alexander, and embrace you tenderly. .

MARIA.

ST. PETERSBURG,

December 23rd, 1809.

MY SWEET AND DEAR CHILD,

Mamma comes to sow in your heart and George's causes of uneasiness very irksome to our dear Alexander and me. I tell you of this with Alex's assent, and you can guess what he and I must feel. Ah, Catan! how sad it is for me at this moment not to see you beside me, when every day may bring us news I would fain lay in your bosom, as the sanctuary to which I confide my troubles, my fears, my alarms. Alexander will read my letter, we see eye to eye, we feel alike, and do not blind ourselves. Here is the truth. A. came to Galdina on Tuesday, 21st: I find him disposed to frown, though he tried to seem in good temper. After dinner, we remained alone, when he said, "Mother, you bade me when I had reasons for uneasiness, tell you of them: I have one which gives me much. Kindly do not interrupt me, and let me finish, for the matter is too serious and of the greatest moment, whatever course is taken."

Catan, I felt like death, my heart ceased to beat, and, in the strict sense of the word, quivered, for I thought it was something personally touching him, and the thought made me unable to breathe. He then resumed:

“The post has just come from Paris, and exceptional events are taking place there. The divorce from the Empress is determined on, she has agreed to it, as has her son, and the deed will be published without delay. Kûrakin reports that the family wants him to marry his niece, Lucien’s daughter, but they say also that he, Bonaparte, has views as to Anne. Others say that the choice will fall on the Archduchess, Emperor Francis’s daughter. Mother, I did not believe in these rumours when Catan was in question, but this time I do, and I leave you to judge whether I have room to be uneasy. If he has the idea and takes steps, what is the answer to be? The man’s personal qualities are against it, the results of a refusal will be bitterness, ill-will, plotting in petty matters, for that is what the man’s like when he’s hurt. If he chooses the Archduchess, he will join hands with Austria, and rouse it up expressly for our hurt, and to show that if we have flouted his alliance he knows how to make useful, and that to our injury, to the Power which values it, and I think I can prognosticate that it will be received with joy and eagerness at Vienna. If unpleasant results follow our refusal, what will our nation say? Anyhow, I find this incident one of the most unfortunate that could have come about. If we must refuse what answer is to be given, what pretext, what can we allege? All these considerations are serious, they must be talked over calmly and without hurry.”

I own to you, Catan, that the terrible alarm I felt when this talk began, when I thought it was something as to the Emperor’s person, having abated, this cruel news did not affect me so much as it might, but for that prelude. I told Alexander at once that all we had done to let you escape this misfortune ought to be our rule at this moment, that I felt towards thee the confidence of a friend, based on thy matured character, I had for

Anne the same feeling of motherly love, the same need for watching over her happiness and her fate, and that hence, having done my best to shelter thee from this hapless lot, it would be illogical and untrue to our principles not to do the same for Anne.

The Emperor said to me, "I was right as to feelings and duties laid on me towards Anne, but that here it was quite another matter: that as for you, there had only been vague talk as to the proposed divorce, that it had not existed, and we had been able to avert the very possibility of the proposal by your marriage; but that this time the divorce was sure, and he believed in the proposal, and even that the deed of divorce would be promulgated directly."

I begged him to tell me the wording of Kûrakin's letter, which would enable me to judge of the matter better. He told me he would send it me next day, that so far it was all he had got. Well, now, Catan, I own I put the painful restraint on myself of discussing this woful plan calmly and reasonably, and I wholly subordinated my feelings to it, which revolted at the notion of the possibility of such a union. But the matter is so serious, and fraught with consequences, that it needs the coldest reason to look at it on all sides. Let us begin with the possibility of consenting to the union, and see what advantages to the State attach thereto:

(1) *The hope* of a prolonged peace with France, which would enable us in some respects to rally our strength by better arranging of our lines of defence, restoring our finances, and seeing to our home matters. Lastly, we shall gain time, and the chance of escaping for a time Napoleon's ambitious projects.

What will be the disastrous consequences of refusing this union? This question falls under two heads, that

of the State, and my daughter in herself. The State first.

(2) It is certain that Napoleon, jealous of our might and fame, and ill-pleased with our conduct towards him in the last war, is not disposed to wish us well, and assuredly his policy has and will have us in view as soon as matters in Spain are settled. Meanwhile, he has done us all the harm he could by hampering our trade, and the wars he has made us wage. Embittered as he will be if we refuse, his ill-will, nay, fury, against us will be increased, and though, to be sure, it will only be to feed it and not call it into being, yet it will burst out sooner and in still more unpleasant guises ; he will play with us until he is in a position to fall on us. Our people, learning from him (for it certainly will not suit him to make a mystery of his designs on Anna, he will know well that it will flatter the bulk of the people to dandle before it the prospects of seeing one of its Duchesses become Empress) that there have been offers of marriage which might have averted from us the curse of war with him, will be angry with the Emperor and me for having rejected them, and the blame of the evils to be borne will fall on us. It is not that I think the whole people would look favourably on this union, no, there will be two sharply marked parties, one anathematising it, the other finding in it splendour, a salve to the national vanity, and the averting of misfortunes. But who can answer for it, say I, that this very union may not embolden this man to redouble his ambitious aims, and to drag Russia, by this very tie, into wars without end ? And, anyhow, it appears likely that this woful Continental System will go on all the longer, depriving us of all trade and working incalculable harm to Russia.

(3) As to my poor Annette's personal interest, she must be looked at as a victim offered for the good of the

State. For how wretched would the child's existence be at being united to a man of villainous character to whom nothing is sacred, and who knows no restraint, since he does not believe in God ?

And would this sacrifice profit Russia ? To what is the child not exposed ? Is a character formed at fifteen ? What would she see and hear in that school of villainy and vice ? If the hapless creature does not have a child the first year to what would she not be exposed ? He will either repudiate her or wish to have children at the cost of her honour and virtue. Catan, all that makes me shudder ! The State on the one hand, my child on the other, with Alexander Sovereign, the refusal laying him open to penalties and ill-haps. To accept the suitor would ruin my child, and God knows whether the public calamities would thus be averted ! It is a cruel dilemma.

Alexander has begged me to take time and think over the answer to be given. He tells me Rumiantsov himself is not for the offer, and quoted to him many instances in History in support of the idea that such unions often led to incalculable mischief. At the same time he does not disguise from himself the evil results of a refusal, and all the harm which would accrue to Russia if Napoleon should turn his eyes on a Princess of Austria. We talked vaguely over the answers to be given and there we left it.

Yesterday A. sent me Kûrakin's dispatch. I own the reading of it reassured me ; it was vague, and the scheme as to Anne seems to me possible but not probable, because the whole family is for Lucien's daughter. I wrote to that effect to the Emperor.

On my reaching here to-day, A. came to see me and said he would begin with something pleasant, showing me a document signed to-day by Rumiantsov and

Caulaincourt, in which the style of Poland is struck out, the promise never to enlarge the Duchy of Warsaw, or set up again the Kingdom of Poland, is firmly given, and the abolition of the Polish Orders laid down. He then said, "Mother, my fears are coming true: after the signing of the deed, Caulaincourt declared officially that the divorce would come about, and added that he would be very happy if on its so doing the ties uniting the two Empires could be drawn still closer in a way more binding. Rumiantsov replied that those ties were drawn to perfection, but Caulaincourt returned several times to the charge in the same terms, to which Rumiantsov opposed a complete silence." Perhaps this silence may keep the other from going any further. But, great God! who can be answerable if this pestilent man has the thought in his head?

That is how things stand just now, Catan. It is cruel. Great God! how painful it is to see you taken from me. We discussed afresh with our Alexander all that was said the day before yesterday, and set before us the picture of for and against with the mirror of Truth. The thought of the reproaches of the people is frightful if things go wrong, but the certain suffering of one's child without any certainty of sparing the people, it is cruel likewise. A. told me at Gatchina, far as he was from being favourable to this union, he remembered you had told him that if the divorce came about and he asked for you, you owed that sacrifice to the State, and I had even scolded you over it. I remember it, too, and I know I told you it was exaltation, and one of those sudden resolves which always lead to harm. Lastly, I will tell you this, Catan, that you are a grown woman, and I could have let your reason act, but Annette is a child, and her character unformed. Shall I, her mother, decree her misery? Ah, Catan, that makes one tremble, and, on

the other hand, all the chances attaching to a refusal are crushing.

However, I own to you, Catan, that the following consideration seems to me worth putting: If this man dies while Anne's husband, that unhappy child is exposed to all the horrors of the troubles such a death will entail, for how suppose that the man's line will be respected? And if he has no children the difficulties will be greater still. Add to this, is there any morality in wishing to cement a state of things, a power as monstrous as is that of this man? Is it not acting directly contrary to the interests of Russia, and perpetuate her trouble? What dost say?

We discussed the answers to be given to Caulaincourt if we decline, and fixed on these:

(1) The youth of my daughter, who is still immature, as seen by the irregularity of certain periods; (2) the delight of the people at your remaining at home makes us come to the settled conclusion not to let Duchess Anne out of the country, but keep her there.

The Emperor feels sure that even creed would make no difference, and he would marry her in the Greek, but for which the plea of religion would be the first to advance, and which by rights is the best founded. I own to you, Catan, that I should still find in the mere possibility of this union a quite major obstacle. What a stain would it not mean to one's personal honour to be unstable in one's principles and way of thinking? Would not posterity be rightly indignant at seeing a Grand Duchess coupled with a being whom the woes of mankind have devoted to the curses of the age? Ah, Catan, weigh all that, and balance it with what I said above. If I accept the match, I consign my child to misery, and maybe shall not even spare the State any woes, and do not escape the reproach of part of the nation. If I

decline it, there may be ill consequences resulting to the State, and I draw on myself the censure of another portion of the nation.

I cannot tell you, dear Catan, how much all this busies and worries me. A. tells me it is impossible to be calmer and more wary than I am: we see and feel alike. How do you see, and George? Answer me at length, and that I may lose no point of my letter, send it back to me, for I cannot copy it. It is two in the morning; I shall show it to-morrow to Alexander, and then send it off to you. Answer me soon, as soon as maybe. The bearer has orders to make as much haste as he can; tell him the same on the way back, and write me all your heart dictates, or rather, all reason dictates, for no heart is wanted in this matter, but principle and reason; not the false honour of show in worldly doings, but the true honour of the upright and high soul.

George has sent Brunner post to the Emperor, and you have not written to me, dear Catan. How is that? You talk to me in your letters by post of this express, but write only a few lines. I hoped the express would have brought me another, but no, there is none for me, and it grieves me. Farewell, dear Catan, I am done for. I embrace you a thousand times, as also George. Answer at the earliest, and speak to mother as she does to you.

Your faithful mother and friend,

MARIA.

*December 24th,
Morning.*

Good-day, dear Catan; I am well, despite the state of my mind, and the horrible dreams of last night, which all the while only put before me the same fact. I forgot to tell you yesterday again that in talking over

the consequences of declining with Alexander I asked him if they were dragging us into war, or rather, if they were bringing it nearer, and whether he was in a position to face it, financially speaking. He answered, "*No!* It would need rare exertions. Our frontier is exposed, we have not a single fortress that way: as for men, I have two hundred thousand on it." I own I do not believe in an early war with that man, should we decline; but that it would be postponed till Spain is dealt with. I believe that whether this match takes place or not, war will still ensue, either against him or on his behalf, for he will draw us into his hostile designs on the Porte, and we shall have, so to speak, to help him to prop Powers which would be dangerous neighbours to Russia; and to fight against him means courting the ill-fortune we have experienced twice before. The total suspension of trade does such frightful harm to the State that its continuance will compel us to remove the restrictions, for the State cannot bear them. That moment will likewise be very critical, and may force us into war with him if he goes against it, and anyhow circumstances may force us into it then. The Emperor told me if God granted him five years' peace, he would have ten fortresses, and his finances in order.

You see, Catan, with what scrupulous truth I tell you all the circumstances, that you may be able to judge of the depth of the difficulties we find ourselves in. How delightful it would be to know a statesman thoroughly well informed and steeped in all the different duties which combine in the circumstances, so as to judge and forecast the future and throw a gleam of light on the course to be followed where national and personal honour find themselves so closely blent with the most sacred feelings of Nature! But, good heavens! is it possible? Would it not be criminal to sacrifice one's child unless absolutely

certain you are sparing the State misfortune, and does that man's character make you so ?

I thought that in pleading Anne's great youth I should add that the woful example of the loss of my two daughters married at 15, made me fear their being settled before their growth was finished and they had arrived at the prime of their constitution.

Farewell, dear Catan and George, answer me as soon as maybe, and send me back this letter without fail.

*December 25th, 1809.
Saturday (Christmas).*

The Ambassador called on the Emperor after Mass and asked him what were the orders for the express that was to be sent to Napoleon with the convention signed on the 23rd instant. The Emperor bade him thank Bonaparte for the good-will he had shown in the matter. The Ambassador rejoined that the Emperor must have seen in the *Moniteur* the great event that had just happened in Paris. He lengthily extolled the Emperor and Josephine, adding that this event offered the occasion or means to draw yet more close the bonds uniting the two Empires.

The Emperor answered him, "They were so already." He rejoined, "Yes, but the means were now there for furthering the weal of humanity by ensuring peace." The Emperor's only reply was a look meant to express the hindrance this plan would encounter, and though he still persisted, he tells me he gave no other reply. Afterwards the talk turned on subjects alien to this, but he later showed a letter from Champagny also speaking of the divorce, and informing him that the event was

being made known by circular to all ministers at foreign Courts. This circular, of which he sent him one, ends with the words that a marriage was to follow the divorce; the Emperor had as yet made no fixed choice. Champagne told him in the covering letter that although he sent him the circular he was not to make use of it at his Court. That is trying to tell us clearly enough, methinks, that his choice is made and falls on our poor little one.

TVER,

December 26th, 1809.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I cannot tell you what I feel. I had your letter an hour ago, and I think it my duty to answer on the spot. It seems to me your fears are well founded, but I do not believe that the course of total refusal is open to us. My idea is, dear mother, to answer Caulaincourt: (1) That Anne is not physically mature; (2) that in view of the ill-fate of my two sisters, you have taken a vow not to marry a daughter again before 18, that the proof of it is in Marie and me, and that as for you and the Emperor, you are *inclined* to it. And we must wheedle Caulaincourt and the French. It seems to me this course would appease everybody, the great thing being to gain time, and the time, which is only three years hence, could not alarm anyone.

Dear mother, I should have flown to your side if the facts Constantine will tell you did not hold me back. Good heavens, why can I not be by you and give you some slight aid through the truth of my feelings! How your confidence touches me and how you must suffer! When I told you my opinion here years ago, I spoke for myself, being old enough at 20 to answer for myself,

and the sacrifice I was willing to make. Be good enough to send me back your letter : I did not venture to copy it so as not to delay this post. You see we do not wholly agree with George, but there's my way of thinking according to my conscience. I hope prudence is observed, for that is the great thing. I say no more, not to detain bearer.

Farewell, dear mother, be careful of yourself. Good heavens, why can I not care for you ! At least the heart of your child is near you. It seems to me that Rumiantsov ought to resume his parley with Caulaincourt, and tell him the thing gaily like good news. It is out of the question ever to talk engagements with the Duke : the other would be gulped down in less than nothing. Well, now, dear mother, that's my idea, God grant it may be a good one. My brother, expecting to leave the day after to-morrow in the night, I shall have the happiness to write to you more at length.

TVER,

December 26th, 1809.

In accordance with your orders, dear and gracious mother, I hasten to answer your letter, which made us quite feel the painfulness of your position. My view is to hold firmly to the resolve not to marry one of the Grand Duchesses, after the ill-fate of the two elder, short of their majority. Catan was married at 20. You bring in nothing new, the rule is established. The greatest moderation is our care for the time being. You will find the same principle again in this reply, and we gain time.

I regard as the greatest boon to us the family of

Napoleon desiring another alliance. Dissension without is our safeguard. I make a great difference between declining and an evasive answer and between that and a vague promise. Be pleased to receive at your feet a son who, touched by your confidence, kisses your hands a thousand and thousand times, and who is for life, dear and gracious mother,

Your devoted and obedient servant and son,
P. F. GEORGE.

III.

LETTERS FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF OLDENBURG TO THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER, IN 1812.

YAROSLAVL,
August 5th, 1812.

It is my duty, sire, to speak to you. Colonel Veliacheff came back to-day from Head Quarters where he had been sent to get the roads repaired. He depicted to me the plight of the Army. By his showing General Barclay is ruining it by his irresolution, and the discontent is at its height. My brother's letter which Catherine sends you confirms at length what I put forward. I adjure you mend the matter and that promptly. Do not make yourself guilty of the undoing of your Empire, I say to you as a man of honour, good patriot and true friend. Bagration is adored, the Army longs for him. You do not like him, but your honour and glory are at stake. Recall the Minister to your side, and trust the Prince with the leading of your forces. Both the Lanskoys steal. There are traitors there, Wolzogen

and Sanghin are excepted : the papers the Cossacks took from Sebastiani show it, for the Council of War that the General Commanding held, made up of Bagration, the Grand Duke, the Chiefs of the Staff of the two armies, the two generals on duty, and Wolzogen, was known of beforehand by the French. General Barclay was so dumbfounded that he dismissed your three aides, Potocky, Branitzky, and Wlodeck. We know nothing about the enemy, while he is well informed. If this inaction goes on the enemy will be at the gates of Moscow and Smolensk lost ere a blow is struck. You know that when the two armies joined, the two generals reported reciprocally to each other, because they did not know which was in command. Later, Bagration behaved like a man of honour. But Barclay, irresolute now, can scarcely get more forward : if he were the man to do so he would ask to serve under the other to silence everybody's tongues, but you can't inspire anything if you feel nothing. The main thing is to mend the matter, and I know no other way than that one should be chief, and Bagration, being already with the army, seems the only choice. The Crown Prince of Sweden will never gain the confidence of Russians—a Russian must be the saviour of Russia. I repeat to you my request to let me go back to the army ; should my wife have been brought to bed I shall ask permission to spend the first ten days with her. I am at your feet heart and soul.

GEORGE.

YAROSLAVL,
August 14th, 1812.

SIRE,

At one in the morning Catherine gave birth without mishap to a son, and, thank God, mother and child

are well. I hasten to announce this news to you, and flatter myself it will find you already back at Petersburg. Your orders only reached me on the 18th. The thirteenth was the appointed day when my wife thought to be confined, and she was wrong only by a few hours. Catherine embraces you with all her heart, and I beg you to be good enough to receive at your feet my little one and me, dear friend.

YAROSLAVL,

August 17th, 1812.

Knowing all the interest you deign to take in your sister, sire, I can again to-day give you the best news of her health. I venture at the same time to beg you to be pleased to stand godfather to the new-comer. I have asked the same favour of the Empress, your mother, and the Grand Duke, and the same of my father, as a token of their friendship. The little one will be called Frederic Constantine Peter.

Now I must ask favours of you. As regards the Princess, I have written to the Empress; and I beg of you, if indeed you are of Catherine's opinion, to support us. I venture also to beg you on the occasion to give a step in rank or a cordon to Gagarin, who serves out of attachment, and zealously. To the two physicians, who both distinguished themselves, some rank, and, to wit, that of "College Councillor": they have both been "Court Councillors" for three years past. I am going in a week, but shall still await your orders here; as I am fain to be where you can give me most to do, be pleased to dispose of me entirely. I am ready for anything. These are not mere words, you know me, and I hope to

have proved that I am attached to you as man to man. Catherine's love to you, and I am at your feet, heart and soul.

I am thinking of leaving on the 25th, so be pleased to honour me with a word in reply ere that.

GEORGE.

YAROSLAVL,

September 3rd, 1812.

Count Rostopchin, sire, writes to me that Prince Kûtûzov leaves Moscow with regret, and moves along the Riazan road. For my part, I am glad not to have to share this ignominy.

Remain true to your resolution not to bow your head to the yoke and preserve the honour of a people that does not deserve its fate. No peace, I adjure you! You are a prey to misfortune, sire. Do not forget a certain man who is ready to sacrifice all to you. No peace, and I am with you everywhere, heart and soul!

GEORGE.

YAROSLAVL,

September 6th.

I await with the most lively impatience the deciding of my fate, sire. I am ready to do anything, but I find myself paralysed by the state of doubt in which you leave me.

People judge you severely, I tell you frankly, for I owe you, as my benefactor, the truth. Your honour begins to be impaired: I no longer dare talk of your glory. Your promised return, which has never come

about, has sown distrust in all hearts, and they attribute the loss of Moscow to you.

Those very Russians who gave the law to all Europe have abandoned their ancient capital to the enemy. You have left the seat of your glorious ancestors in perfect ignorance at a moment when all States vie with each other in showing their devotion by making the greatest sacrifices. Your plight begins to be too critical for me to be able to be silent longer.

I await your orders with the utmost impatience. Give me work to do. To die is nothing, but to do nothing is to live shamefully.

I am at your feet, heart and soul.

GEORGE.

YAROSLAVL,

September 15th.

You owe it to the critical position of Russia and your own honour, sire, to look with the greatest care into what they can reproach you with, and what you have to do.

Do not lose the esteem of a people that till now has been wont to make an idol of its Sovereign. It seems to me most necessary that you should place yourself nearer to the seat of war: the time you lose through the delay in news reaching you does incalculable harm to your affairs. To command your armies like a man of honour is advice I cannot give you, but if the fortune of war turns in your favour, to be within reach so as to re-enter Moscow with the victorious army: such is the step I venture to suggest to you. Could you show yourself at Moscow again any other way? Leave Petersburg, stay near the army. It is a fortnight since the

taking of Moscow, and have as yet done nothing striking to show before all Russia that it can expect everything of you. Let confidence be lost and all is lost. You have still a fine part to play, but show yourself a Sovereign and redouble your activity. Be careful of your honour, regain your glory and the confidence of a people that you may be proud to be Head of.

YAROSLAVL,
September 16th.

To-day I received a packet from Count Rostopchin, who begs me to forward it you by a sure hand: I am sending off this very moment one of the Officers of my Household so that your Majesty may get it. Yesterday I gave your orders as to recruiting, and will try to carry them out as speedily as possible. God grant that all the efforts of your vast Empire may bring about a happy result! Deign to receive me at your feet, where I am, heart and soul.

P.S.*—Seeing George write, I cannot refrain from these few words to tell you I love you much and would love to see you happy.

YAROSLAVL,
September 22nd.

I have just received your letter, sire, of the 18th inst., and do not delay an instant in answering it. Its contents are too momentous for me to put off

* In the hand of the Grand Duchess Catherine.

for a moment pouring out my heart to you. Our devotion to you is proof against everything, and not to be bribed. Nothing can tempt those who value the quiet of their conscience before everything, and who believe in a future. We have told the truth in our letters, and concocted nothing. The public voice condemns you. Catherine has seen my tears and I hers on your account. I am attached to you as one man to another, and shall be your friend to the very tomb. The world is unjust, but I am not. My last letter, which you will have received by now, will show you how I think of you day and night : I desire only your glory, having no interest in the world but that of our country. Catherine is an angel, your knight, but hides nothing from you. There may be two opinions : had I been you I should never have left Moscow ! I do not take back a word of my letter : I do not denounce you, but I hide nothing from you. I ask permission of you to venture to come with Catherine to Petersburg to explain ourselves. I blame you for not having told me till the 18th what you should have directly you learned it. Our close relations called for its being done quite at once. Do not fear the members of your family, but those who have distrust in their hearts. There are people proof against all ; you must know how to part them from the great body.

Wholly yours, heart and soul.

GEORGE.

YAROSLAVL,

September 23rd.

The letter appended, sire, contains a request from Count Rostopchin asking that his son may be

posted to the Horse Guards with the same rank he now holds. I venture to beg you to grant him this favour, if it is feasible. Making you a thousand and thousand excuses for pestering you again to-day, I beg you to let me be at your feet, where I am, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,
September 26th.

I address these lines to you, sire, to lay at your feet my thanks for what you have been pleased to do for my newly-born : my gratitude is as lively as sincere. I lacked strength to perform that duty the first day, your letter affected me too much. Catherine is well, but the shock was a great one to her. We may sometimes tell you too much, but we will never disguise anything from you. I am yours, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,
September 28th.

Your letter, sire, received to-day, gave us infinite pleasure. The present moment requires that all ties should be closer than ever. Count on us everywhere and in every case. I take the liberty of enclosing some papers from the Moscow shop that I received by Major Pobedrof of the Cossacks, who watch that road, in case they should be unknown to you.

The inaction of the Army distresses me, but the enemy must find his grave among us if energy is shown. If Prince Volkonski is to come back at once he can bring

you trustworthy news of the state of things. A general who keeps on sleeping does not seem to me made for command. The French have pushed forward on the Vladimir road within eight versts of Bogorodsky, they are as far on the way to Dmitroff, but so far their one object seems to be to get provisions, which they are wholly without. The Russo-German Legion is reinforced daily by prisoners who are all ill-content. I have many ideas as to the interior: if we keep going, the winter must force the French to recross the frontier. I shall do at my post what my attach and zeal can prompt. I have your fame and honour at heart; I shall go on telling you what I think. I feel as much as you the difficulty of the juncture and your position, and often feel sorry for you to the depth of my soul. The taking of Moscow can only be redeemed by the salvation of Europe, which is in your hands. Your fortunes, nay, those of the world, are so, and undying fame is to your hand.

I am yours, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,

September 29th.

I charged Prince Volkonsky to tell you, sire, that two ideas occurred to me, one to march with my Tver militia straight on Smolensk and cut the enemy's communications, the other being to put Moscow between two fires, with Wintzingerode on the Yaroslavl and Tver side, having heard from Moscow that there are scarcely any troops left in that city. I told the *ispravnik* (constable) of Soubzov to join hands with him of Sytcheoka. My plan was not carried out as I got word that the militia was to pass under the orders of General

Wintzingerode. I believe, however, it would be the greatest use if they could push forward all the militias : ours being at Rostov, I shall push it forward to cover Kutiajin ; the French having already occupied Dmitroff, the posts might be intercepted. Be pleased to receive me at your feet, and excuse the haste with which I write these few words.

P.S.*—I, too, only desire to be able to prove you mine, dear friend, and only send you these few lines to embrace you with all my heart.

YAROSLAVL,

October 2nd.

Here I am with my pen in my hand, sire, to inform you that I have to-day a letter from Bentinck, telling me how the Crown Prince of Sweden expressed to him the desire to see me come there with the Admiral. Here are the very words of his letter : “ Since my arrival here, General Armfeldt has returned from Sweden and brought me a message from the Prince Royal saying H.R.H. wished very much to see you and that I should come with you.” Not venturing to write anything to a foreigner without your sanction, sire, I answered him that I placed before you the passage in your letter, and that I should await your instructions, but that my last were to go back to my post. There is a second point in the Admiral’s letter, on which I cannot answer without receiving your orders, sire. He asks where he could see me : “ I should come to Yaroslavl if I was sure of finding Y.H. there.” Be good enough to favour me with a word in answer, that I may settle definitely with the

• In the hand of the Grand Duchess Catherine.

Admiral, who says towards the end of his letter, "I shall finish by saying that I defer my return to England till I have some conversation with Y.H., and shall therefore thank you to give me a line on the subject of your probable movements."

When you have so much to busy you I have no hope of snatching a moment from you. I think only of you, being yours for life, heart and soul, with a devotion I would fain show on every occasion.

Here, sire, is a new proclamation.

YAROSLAVL,
October 30th.

Having received this day, sire, through my brother, General Wilson's letter and the post on its way to Wittgenstein, I hasten to make it reach you, thinking its contents might be of high interest. I beg you to let me of grace be at your feet on this occasion.

P.S.*—Two words again to-day, dear friend, to assure you of my constant thought of you and friendship.

YAROSLAVL,
October 14th.

I crave your pardon, sire, for addressing to you this letter, which contains solely the showing of my personal desire, but I think it my duty to let you know my way of thinking for my own part. I am too much concerned to be in every instance worthy of your bounties

* By Grand Duchess.

and her who makes my happiness. You know the way in which I left the Army, my levy, which was my only reason for being there, was completed, and had passed under the orders of those who are to lead it against the enemy, so I think my being here is of very slight use. My districts being so near the seat of war that the civil has given way to the military authority, my share for the time being is none. Besides, all works are at a standstill and the various despatches are carried out at Tver by a Senator specially commissioned for it. I by no means regret my keeping away from the Army, but now matters seem to be recovering, and I am fain to distinguish myself in the struggle which will redound to Russia's glory. The reasons for the Grand Duke's leaving I know: my own conduct with the Army is, I venture to say, above reproach. You did me the honour to tell me you would employ me about your person, but there has been nothing said about my resuming my post, which has been off to a happier juncture, and I own frankly to you, sire, that I am by no means disposed to sit still at a season which may decide the fate of Russia and of Europe. I crave leave of you to join the Army. I desire to distinguish myself and earn the right to some more active employment. I feel vigour enough to deserve a coat which I no longer like looking at when I see others wear it with honour and distinction, while I have no right to it. Be good enough to favour me with a "Yes" or "No." To-day, sire, I received your order of the 8th inst. to remove from his post the Governor of Tver. It was not without difficulty that I managed to read the paper, being the first of that purport in the five years I have served. I determined to answer it myself, not wishing to trust the answer to a secretary. These gentlemen might quite well have applied to me as Governor-General and nearer at hand than you, sire, instead of making a

man miserable. Do me the favour yourself to choose another in his stead. The bearer of this, Wardenburg, I have told to bring me back your answer as soon as may-be : he has highly distinguished himself in this campaign. He has been put forward for promotion, and it seems now that the same step was his by seniority : if you could make him Captain he would in the end have, not caught up, but at least got near his comrades. Yours, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,

October 16th.

I cannot send you, sire, the official report I have received to-day relative to the startling misfortune that has overtaken Baron Wintzingerode without sending a bit of a letter with it. I now await instructions from you with whom the defence of Tver and Yaroslavl is to rest, and I own the place which falls vacant by the taking of the General is very tempting, being a separate corps with which one can distinguish oneself. Be pleased to favour me at the earliest with an answer by Wardenburg, and believe in the respectful devotion of him who is yours, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,

October 20th.

I venture to add to the two letters that Bartolomei has brought me from the front for you, sire, some important despatches, notably those for Nesselrode, which were specially commended to me by the bearer. I beg you to receive me at your feet, sire, where I am, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,

November 4th.

If I importune you again to-day, sire, it is to carry out the last will of the late General Tûchkoff. But a few instants before heaving his last sigh, he recommended to me all his A.D.C.'s, and officially I have had the happiness to place before your eyes the various rewards he fixed on himself. He further added the wish to see Nagel given me as an aide, he having been eleven years about his own person, and having nursed him during his long sickness day and night. I think it my duty to beg you to let me have him about me : I venture to append a note showing his rank and regiment.

I am yours for life, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,

November 13th.

It is a month to-morrow since Wardenburg left here : I await your decision, sire, with the keenest impatience. I send you the present post to get your approval of the measures I have taken to house the 1,500 sick. The need is great and the means none : I see with my own eyes the most cruel sufferings, and don't know how to remedy them. All that rests with me is done : my prisoners clothed, and the sick cared for, but the number is vast. Be pleased to send back the express at the earliest : without further orders from you I abandon all responsibility : I have made a beginning, but cannot end without you. Sire, in the name of humanity I beg of you, do not hold back the express. I burn with impatience to show merit and see myself paralysed at such

a crucial moment. Extricate me from this plight; it is a cruel one for a man of honour, and one who is attached to you as I, and has given you clear proofs of it. I am at your feet, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,
November 13th.

Wardenburg came this morning, sire, and I hasten to answer your gracious letter at once. I venture to profit by your permission to go to the front, and shall await your orders at Tver, for which I leave the day after to-morrow. Be pleased to send back this *feldjager* (despatch rider) there, and at the same time decide on my report about the hospitals.

I will send you Bykhorets to Novgorod to see on the spot into the matter of the Governor, who, I feel sure, is a man of honour, incapable of peculating, but who let himself be led away by the first impulse. The Governor of Tver is by no means to my liking, I beg you to remove him. It is the course of the matter that hurts me, I have had to learn of abuses by *Ukaz*, although I might have mended them myself if those gentlemen had applied to me. I do not know how to express to you, sire, how I desire to be found blameless in my duty, for I am too keen to deserve your confidence and benefits, and there is no poodle more faithful than I. Now I could recommend for the post of governor Agariev, now in the Ministry of Justice: before, he served under me. He is a very upright man and will, I flatter myself, do well at Tver. In case you should already have given away the post I am still satisfied, for there is nothing more difficult than the choice of men.

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the successes which begin to follow each other rapidly. Thanks to your firm stand Russia will gain the day. War saved us, peace would have ruined us, and covered us with shame. Wintzingerode is set free by Chernychoff: there is an excellent man back in the service. Russia seemed tottering, and was like to become the second power in Europe; you will restore her to the first place. I am at your feet, heart and soul.

YAROSLAVL,
November 16th.

I have written to you to-day, sire, by Jordan, and my despatch-rider. This will reach you by Count Potocky, who begged me to arm him with some lines for you. He has a plan which he read to me, and as he is himself a rich landowner I thought, maybe, you might turn to account his land and his name in the Polish provinces. Be pleased to look into his notions: perhaps you can employ him by granting him what you have to Mamonoff and others, who have raised regiments to put on the uniform of a general without being such. He suspects nothing; I only promised to tell you, sire, that I have read his plan. It seems to me there is much good in his notions, and I should wish at the present juncture to put all springs in motion. I venture to commend the bearer to your good will and beg you to excuse me if I trouble you so often, but I am fain to show you my devotion in all cases, and hence it is that I am at your feet.

TVER,

November 26th.

It was this morning, sire, that my express handed me the assent to my report on the barracks at Yaroslavl, by which you have conferred a great boon and the order to hold myself in readiness. I await impatiently the moment when I can see you again, and burn with desire to be able to distinguish myself. On my arrival here, I sent to the Governor word to say he was ill, informing him of the displeasure he had incurred. So I beg of you, sire, to give the post to some one, as the present position of the administration is not easy, and an active and upright man is needed in the present circumstances. I am pretty satisfied with my hospitals here: much has been done in these parts. At the general peace, I rejoice beforehand in the thought of being able to resume peaceful avocations. What a vast field will then be offered to your benevolent heart! Firm as you are, glory should be with you. Be pleased to receive me at your feet.*

* As we know, the Prince died of typhoid fever a few days after sending this letter.

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